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A

GIFT

From Fairy Land.

A

GIFT

FROM

FAIRY LAND.

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If the old maxim, that "seeing is believing," had not become in a great measure obsolete, under the march of mind, and the progress of improvement, the long-mooted question of the existence of the fairies, would have been settled on what in past ages of ignorance, was considered the most substantial basis, to wit, ocular demonstration. But, alas! seeing is not believing in this unbelieving age; and though the accumulated testimony of the existence of these little sprites, if brought to bear on a question of fact, would satisfy any Court or Jury in Christendom, still the skepticism of Science, and the hardihood of Philosophy, have at all times wilfully shut their eyes to a chain of evidence, which would be amply sufficient, to hang a hundred innocent persons, where hanging was in fashion.

It has been, however, settled by the decisions of almost all the learned, of the present times, at least, that credulity and superstition are incompatible with a certain degree of knowledge and general intelligence; and that in proportion as these latter become widely diffused, the airy creations of hope, fear, and fancy, vanish like spectres at the dawn of day. But I must confess that I for one doubt the validity of this empty pretension. All, for example, unite in boasting, that the present is the most enlightened age the world ever knew; and yet do we not every day see the most enormous impositions practised on the credulity of mankind, which, in their consequences, are a thousand times more mischievous, than the innocent superstitions of classic, or oriental lore?

Shall we dare to boast, without blushing in each other's faces, that science and knowledge have banished superstition and credulity from the world, while the recollection of the imposture of Matthias is fresh in our minds; while the wretched train of fanatics, called Mormonites, continues to rove over the land with increasing numbers; while the Shakers remain steadfast in their faith in the supernatural powers of Jemima Wilkinson; and above all, while millions of enlightened people believe to this day, that a "*promise to pay*," is equivalent to actual payment?

Those who have taken the pains to investigate the history of the human mind, in its progress from age to age, will, I think, be perfectly satisfied, that there is just about as much superstition and credulity in one as in another, and that the only difference is in the modes by which they manifest themselves. Compare, for example, the lore of Fairy land, with the rare absurdities, of what is called the Science of Phrenology, or the still more outrageous imposture of Animal Magnetism, and then ask ourselves, which requires the greatest stretch of human credulity, or abject superstition, in order to swallow its strange improbabilities? The latter most especially, is quite as much at war, with all the known laws of nature, of matter, and the organization of matter, of mind and its sphere of action, as is the being and agency of the fairies in the affairs of mankind. The truth is, that as in the individual, so in the never-ceasing changes of this rolling orb, every revolving period, every new acquisition of years, produces a new succession of shadows, which are pursued with equal avidity, and equal faith in their reality. New game starts up at every step before us, and while we acknowledge to ourselves, that what we have run down, was but a series of unsubstantial nothings, we still continue the pursuit of the objects before us, with an eagerness, which, like that of the gamester, increases with every unsuccessful cast.

For my part, if we must be the tools of superstition and credulity, as seems to be our destiny, I confess I prefer the ancient, to the modern mode of playing on these instruments. It is not alone, because the little pranks of mischief or beneficence, played by the elves and fairies, are associated with that period of our existence, which seems all sunshine and flowers, as we look back upon it,

that the story of these tiny beings, appeals to the memory and fancy, with such alluring fascinations. There is something intrinsically delightful in these airy creations, whether of the imagination or the senses. Their agency was of a light, pleasing, and gentle character, and unlike the old Gothic superstitions, devoid of cruelty or malignity. In their kindness they were beneficent and even in their punishments, there was nothing to inspire terror, horror, or despair. All was diminutive in Fairy land; the little beings did not, like giants, ogres, and witches, indulge unnatural appetites, or deal in bloody atrocities. They were the creations of an age of comparative simplicity and innocence, and partook in the characteristics of pastoral gentleness. They were associated with flocks and herds, shepherds and shepherdesses; their delight was solitude; their harmonies those of nature; and their sports were in the silence of night, by the light of the moon. They were in truth, a pure and gentle race; the records of their agency in human affairs, afford the finest lessons of morality to the infant mind; the romantic air, the rich invention, and inspiring interest embodied in them, are in truth highly contrasted, with the greater portion of those abortions of mind and imagination, which have since superseded them, and over which our children daily pass to the region of Morpheus.

But even those who are willing to acknowledge the existence of fairies in the Old World, sturdily deny that they have ever yet honoured the New with their presence. Absurd and foolish incredulity! Do not the elfin race love repose and liberty; and can it be supposed for a moment, that they could resist the temptation of the boundless solitudes of nature, and the generous freedom of this vast hemisphere? No. Every presumption is in favour of the authenticity of the following statement, which I proceed to lay before the reader, as well for the purpose of demonstrating the emigration of the fairies, as to account satisfactorily for the appearance of the following legends, as the dogmatical learned are pleased to call the authentic records of Fairy land.

Sometime in the year 1818, or 1819, (for in regard to this there is some little uncertainty, owing to the want of Almanacs, in this particular region of country, at that time,) Mr. Simeon Starkweather emigrated from Buncombe county, North Carolina, to

the great West, in search of better land, though if the truth must be told, that which he already possessed was quite good enough to satisfy a reasonable man. But in the first place, he had been told there were sections of country in Kentucky, considerably richer than any the Almighty ever formed, where it was only to stamp on the ground, and the wheat would spring up higher than your ears; and in the second place, he was impelled by the great maxim of "go ahead," which brought his ancestors from the Old World, and will never rest till it has carried their posterity to the uttermost extremity of the New, where I suppose they will jump off, in search of another still newer.

Being determined to proceed far enough, Simeon, or Sim, as he was familiarly called, continued to go ahead, till he came into what is now called Simpson county—so denominated after his name—where he pitched his tent, just at the head of one of the sources of Green river, which joins the Ohio, where Evansville now stands. It was not far from the Big Barren, so called, because it bears no trees, though I am told it is one of the most fertile spots in all Kentucky. The first settlers of that fine *Old* State—it is almost half a century old—were mighty hunters before the Lord, and considered the land as "trifling," which afforded no shelter for game.

Sim was delighted with his new "location," where he had all out doors for his patrimony, and plenty of elbow room. He shot all the spring, summer, and autumn, and in the winter set traps, for all sorts of outlandish animals. In short, as he told me, "he lived a free and easy life—the happiest in the world, for he shaved himself only once a year, and had a most Almighty everlasting sprinkle of varmints all about him."

Here he resided a good number of years, undisturbed, save now and then by an interloper, who came to settle some ten or twenty miles off in the neighbourhood, and molested him a little. But all at once he became subject to divers strange annoyances, only one of which I shall mention, for fear of being circumstantial and tedious. He continually found that the game which had been caught, as he could see by the marks on his traps, was stolen away during the night, or had released itself in some manner, for which he could not account. He at last determined to lay in

wait for the thief, if it was a thief, and if not, "to discover the unaccountable contrivance of the kritters," as he said, "in slipping their wind so slick." Accordingly he watched for several nights in succession, during which nothing visited his traps, and nothing was seen or heard, except, as he sometimes thought, a strange sort of whispering about his ears, which confused him exceedingly.

The moment he ceased his watch, the traps exhibited the same appearances every morning, and Sim found his dander getting up in such a style, that he could hardly keep from fighting with himself, having nobody else to try his prowess upon. At, first he thought of going over to his next neighbour, about twenty miles off, to see if he wouldn't accommodate him with a fight, but his mind took another direction, and he determined to catch the 'tarnal varmint, whatever it was. He contrived various means, and invented new devices, but all to no purpose, and began to meditate going ahead to some other spot farther West; when he was arrested in his purpose, by one of the strangest adventures he ever encountered in all his life.

Going out in the morning of the twenty-first of December, 1833, about sunrise, with his gun, and followed by his two dogs, Thunder and Lightning, he found that a new trap, which he had invented the day before, and set for the first time, was sprung. "'Thinks I, I've got the varmint now," said Sim, "and if I don't split him into shingles, I'm a triflin feller. So you see, I creeps up as quiet as a dumb adder, motioned Thunder and Lightnin to lie still, got close up to the trap, and listened with both ears I reckon. But I heard nothin at all, except as I conceited, a little, somethin like the queer whispers, that I used to hear, when I was out a scoutin for the thief, or whatever it might be.

"Well, at last, I thought I'd lift the trap, as there seemed nothin under it, when as soon as I took it up, whew! I wish I may be shot flying—a thing which we Kentucky boys can't stomach by no means—if there didn't fly out a flock of the queerest little varmint women, I ever did see. I was pretty well stumped, you may depend, but kinder by instinct cocked my gun, and let fly at them; but they gave a scream, and were out of sight before my buckshot could overtake them."

Such was the account which Sim gave me about a year ago, as I stopped at his cabin, in a tour through the rich and beautiful State of Kentucky. But the most interesting part of the story is yet to come. In once more raising his trap, which in his astonishment, he had let fall on seeing the strange birds he had caught, he discovered a roll of birch-bark, tied up, according to his description, after the manner of a parchment-deed. This he had kept, without feeling, as he said, any great curiosity about what it contained, having in fact, forgot all his learning during his sojourn in the woods. But he had a great notion of catching some of the queer little varmints that he supposed had dropped it, and confessed to me that he had set that trap, and remained with his gun cocked, watching it almost ever since they threw him off his balance so completely that he missed his mark for the first time since he was knee-high to a grasshopper.

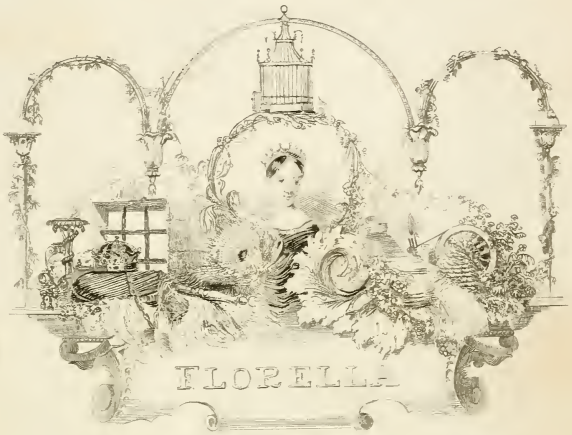
The roll of birch-bark, on examination, was found to contain the following Tales, embellished with the identical designs, of which a *fac-simile* is given in this volume. The whole is now published for the joint benefit of the Editor and honest Sim, who not being aware of the liberality, not to say, munificence of our Publishers, modestly anticipates just enough from his share of the profits to buy him a new rifle, with which he is in good hopes of bringing down some of the little varmints aforesaid, that nobody in their senses, can doubt, were a knot of fairies, which by some inscrutable accident, or equally inscrutable design, had thus been caught in the trap of my good friend Simeon Starkweather. Sim has promised to keep constantly on the watch with his rifle ready cocked, in case they should make their appearance again, and I cannot forbear indulging the hope that at some future period, he may be able to furnish the public by the same means, with a second volume of A Christmas Gift from Fairy Land, the title borne by the mysterious manuscript.

The public's humble servant,
SAMPSON FAIRLAMB.

Chicago, April 1st, 1838.

FLORELLA, OR

THE FAIRY OF THE RAINBOW.



In a distant country, not yet discovered, there once reigned a powerful king, who having neglected to pension any of the historians and poets of his court, they in revenge unanimously resolved never to mention his name, which has thus been irretrievably lost to posterity. All that is known of him is, that he was a widower with an only daughter, who was the most beautiful child ever seen, and who, as usual, had a fairy for her godmother. That

he was a good and worthy king, is sufficiently proved, by the oblivion which shrouds his name: since, with very few exceptions, it is the ambition and crimes of monarchs, rather than their virtues, which render them illustrious.

The young princess being an only child, and heiress to a great kingdom, was, as might be expected, carefully attended to, and taught every thing calculated to render her worthy of the high station to which she was destined; for the king, her father, had long given out that he never intended to marry again, either because he despaired of getting so good a wife, or that in future he was determined to be master at home, as well as abroad. In order to prevent her from being contaminated by low company, she was shut up in a high tower, and several maids-of-honour appointed to attend her, that they might instil into her mind a conviction of her superiority over the rest of her fellow-creatures, and the indispensable necessity of supporting her dignity on all occasions. For this purpose, they were all strictly enjoined never to contradict or thwart the young princess, except when she followed the dictates of nature; and to refrain from saying or doing any thing to remind her that she was mortal. The king, her father, and his counsellers, who were all considered exceeding wise men, prescribed this course in the education of Florella, (for that was her name,) from a conviction founded on long experience, that the less monarchs knew of their subjects, the better they could govern them; and the less the people

knew of their monarchs, the more they would respect their person and dignity.

Accordingly, Florella had every thing she could wish for but liberty. When desirous to walk forth into the fields to chase the butterflies or pluck the flowers, she was told it did not become the heiress of a mighty kingdom, to indulge in such vulgar amusements; and when she wished to join in the sports of the little children of her own age, the old governess, who was one of the most dignified ladies

of the court, would shake her finger and frown, telling her, at the same time, that a king's daughter and the heiress of a mighty kingdom, ought not to associate with her fellow-creatures on terms of such degrading equality. She was placed in the strait waistcoat of court etiquette, environed on all sides by restraints, obliged to perform every thing by rule, and, though she made others do as she pleased, was never permitted to do as she pleased herself.

Thus shut up in her high tower, and debarred from all intercourse with the world, she passed a great portion of the day at the window, watching the little children in their free and airy gambols enjoying their sportful hilarity, their freedom and the crusts of bread which they devoured with such a happy zest, while she herself turned with sickly indifference or disgust from all the delicacies prepared to pamper her appetite. As she grew up, her confinement became every day more tedious and irksome, and her desire of liberty more intense. She pined away, in envy of the more fortunate children of poverty, who, left to themselves and their wayward impulses, went whither they pleased, and indulged in all the innocent freedom of nature, without the restraint of maids-of-honour, or an old titled governess. She often likened herself to the little bird, which had been given her as a companion by her fairy godmother, and which, whenever it saw its fellows sporting and chirping in the forest that surrounded the high tower, would flutter about, its feathers shivering with agitation, thrust its head

between the wires, and try with all its little energies to escape and enjoy the freedom of boundless nature. "Poor bird!" said Florella, one day, when its song seemed like that of one mourning its long captivity, "poor little bird! thy fate is like mine, only that though I cannot free myself, I can give thee liberty. I grieve to part with thee, for thou seemest the only living thing with whom I can hold any sympathy, thou being a prisoner as well as I. Go, and enjoy the sweetest of all blessings, a life of liberty. Perhaps thou wilt sometimes come in the morning and evening to cheer me with thy song, which will be doubly sweet, because thy minstrelsey will be voluntary." So saying, she opened the cage and taking the little bird gently in her hand, carried it to the window, kissed its yellow bill and set it at liberty. The little bird at first sailed round and round in airy circles before the window, as if loath to part from its gentle benefactress; then settled down on the branch of a stately elm nigh by, and pouring forth a strain of melody more sweet and varied than ever it did in its wirey prison, returned once more to the window, put forth its little bill for a parting kiss, and then disappeared in the shady recesses of the woods.

Florella, though she could not find in her heart to regret what she had done, felt the departure of her feathery associate so bitterly, that she sat down and wept, until the old governess came, and argued an hour or more to convince her that, being the daughter of a great king, and heiress to a mighty kingdom, she

was the happiest young damsel in the world. She asked her if she wished for any thing, and the young princess answered, "Nothing but liberty:" whereupon the old lady shook her head, and told her that liberty was only fit for the subjects and slaves of her father.

"Would I were one of these," answered Florella, and the old governess turned up her sharp nose in contempt of such a grovelling sentiment.

When evening approached, Florella was anxious to know whether the little bird would come and sing to her, and as the dim twilight gathered around, her anxiety increased to a degree that was painful, when,

all at once she heard the well-known strain from the same branch of the stately old elm. It was like the visit of a long absent friend, and wiping away her tears, she sat listening to the ever-varying notes, which, pouring forth in the silence of the pensive hour were inexpressibly touching and delicious. Florella almost fancied she could translate the strain into a song in praise of liberty, mingled, now and then, with a mournful melody, indicating pity for her solitude and confinement. Every evening and morning, the little bird returned, and chanted his music with endless variety, soothing the sorrows of his captive mistress while he staid, but only rendering her more melancholy in his absence.

Thus passed Florella's time, until she arrived at the age of fifteen, when new thoughts and feelings gradually introduced themselves into her gentle bosom. Her sleep became restless, her dreams confused and perplexing, and she no longer hailed the presence of her little bird with eager welcome, or listened to its song with her wonted pleasure. She grew more tired of her prison every day: her temper became irritable and capricious; and on one occasion she made the old governess stare, by pettishly asking, if her father intended to keep her for ever from the sight of the young princes that every day visited his court. The old lady threw up her hands, opened her eyes, and wondered who put such strange notions in the head of the princess. She little suspected that Florella had another teacher, and that nature had now become her guide.

One sultry summer evening, having despatched her maids-of-honour on various errands, devised for the purpose of getting rid of their irksome attentions, and persuaded the old governess to go to rest, which she was the more inclined to do, from having drank an

additional glass of cordial—Florella fell into a sad revery. The dead calm, the desperate monotony of her existence had now become intolerable, and she passed much of her time in weeping, or complaining to herself, concerning her doleful captivity and melan-

choly prospects. "What avails it," she exclaimed, "that I am the daughter of a king, and heiress to a great empire, if I am thus to be debarred from all intercourse with every body but slavish women, and shut out from pleasures which I behold the lowest of my fellow-creatures enjoying under my window? Better had I been born the daughter of one of my father's meanest subjects; for then I might taste the sweets of liberty, and be happy like them. Alas! that I should have for my godmother a fairy whom I never see, and who never troubles herself with me or my happiness."

As she uttered this querulous complaint, she heard the chant of the little bird from its wonted perch, but it afforded her no solace in the irritation of her feelings. After a prelude of varying melody, the tuneful song-

ster flitted in at the window, and lighting on the shoulder of the princess, placed its little bill close to her

ear, and caused her to start and tremble by whispering as follows: "My princess complains of the neglect of her godmother, and I am come to know her wishes. Tell me what you wish and the fairy shall soon know it. Whether your desires are granted or not, will depend on their being reasonable or otherwise. Speak, my princess, and be not afraid. What is it you most covet?"

"Liberty," at length replied Florella: "in other words, happiness, since experience has taught me they are one and the same. If thou comest from my godmother, I beseech thee, little bird, to tell her that the first wish of my heart is, that I had been born a peasant's daughter instead of a princess; that I might be freed from perpetual restraints and irritating supervision; that I might sing, laugh, dance, and enjoy my homely food with such a zest, as I see in the sons and daughters of the poor, who are every day sporting in the woods yonder; go where I list, do as I list, and be free like them. O! that I had thy wings, little bird, that I might free myself from this abode of listlessness, idleness, and despair!"

"Well," answered the bird, "your wishes shall soon be granted, at least, in so far as your release from this prison. The king your father has contracted you in marriage with the son and heir of the great emperor of the moon, who is daily expected at court. So prepare yourself, my princess, to be as amiable as possible, for the prince is said to be a great connoisseur in beauty, and a special admirer of little feet. Farewell:

you will not see me again unless I am specially called for. You will soon have a new plaything, and the little bird and his song will be no longer remembered. Farewell, my princess; recollect, I am the messenger of thy godmother, and whenever you call for me I shall appear." The little bird then chirped his adieu, and flying through the window disappeared.

Florella remained in a profound revery for some time after the departure of the fairy messenger. The

idea of being soon released from her irksome abode, and the teazing impertinence of the old governess, brought joy to her bosom, while that of a husband, in the person of the prince of the moon, created a tremulous fluttering in the same snowy region. She straightway began to fancy what sort of a being he was, and, ere her fit of abstraction was over, had conjured up a youth clothed in all those attributes of body and mind, to which the inexperienced heart of woman bows with lowly adoration. She longed for the hour of liberty, and anticipated, with thrilling hope, the period when she would resign it voluntarily to her destined mate.

In a few days, the prince of the moon arrived at the court of her father, and Florella was carried thither, to be introduced to him, decked in robes of state, glittering with diamonds; and as the prince was known to be such an admirer of little feet, she wore a pair of slippers so tight that she could scarcely walk. As she rode to the royal palace, her heart throbbed with mingled hopes and fears, and she wondered if the picture of her imagination would be realized. Though her person was as genteel as it was beautiful, her seclusion from the world had made her both modest and timid, and when brought into the presence of a splendid court, in the midst of which stood the young prince of the moon, she blushed up to the eyes, and what with her embarrassment and the tightness of her slippers, made rather an awkward appearance.

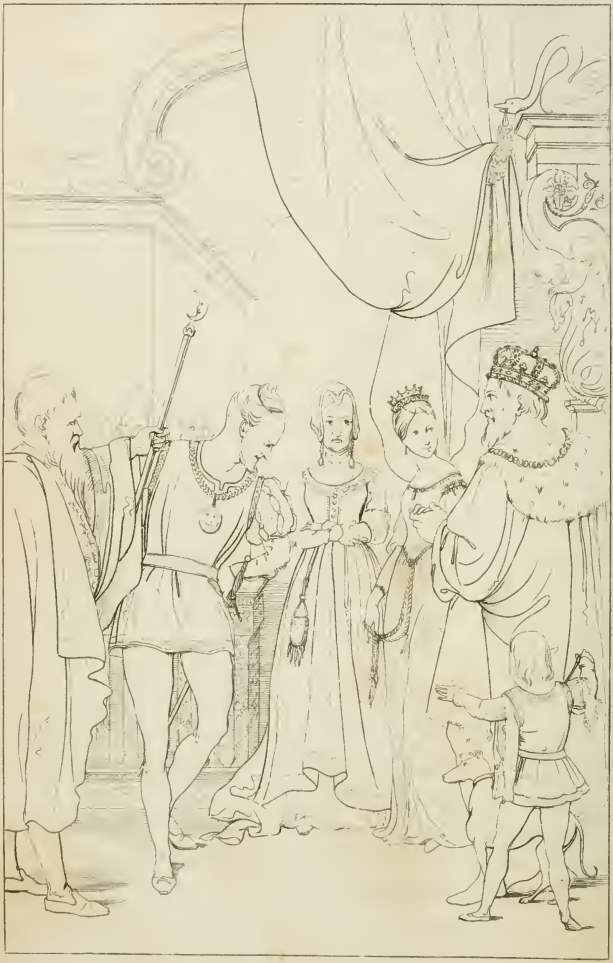
The prince, besides being a great judge of female

propriety, had a particular antipathy to blushing, which he sagaciously concluded was a sign of a troubled conscience. The first impression made by Florella was, therefore, not at all favourable, and when he observed that though she had beautiful little feet, she did not seem to know how to use them, he shrugged his shoulders, elevated his eyebrows, took a pinch of snuff, and said something to his favourite attendant, which being uttered in the language of the moon, puzzled all the king's court to such a degree, that their situation was quite deplorable: nevertheless, they all stood in utter astonishment at his wisdom and wit.

The prince being a great traveller, and, withal, a man of the world, behaved with singular discretion and propriety. He bowed his head almost to the floor, complimented Florella on the style of her dress, asked the price of her diamonds, and taking a little ivory rule from his pocket, bent down on one knee and took measure of her foot, which he pronounced exactly of the size indispensable to his happiness. "Had it been the hundredth part of an inch longer," said he, "I should have been the most miserable of men."

"But your moonstruck highness," said one of Florella's maids-of-honour, "is not yet acquainted with the beauties of her mind, and the strength of her understanding."

"Pooh!" replied the prince, "what is the strength of the understanding but the foundation on which people stand?" and pointed to the foot of the princess to



give point to the joke. Whereupon, all the court laughed, except Florella, who stood blushing in a manner very unbecoming, while her heart swelled with indignation and disappointment.

The vision of her imagination had given place to the reality. Instead of a handsome young prince, bearing all the outward semblance of his rank, and exhibiting the air noble at the very ends of his fingers, she beheld a diminutive, effeminate creature, youthful indeed, but carrying, in his face and person, the marks of premature decay, with nothing to designate him as a man, but his enormous black whiskers, and with a sallow, faded, greenish complexion, which probably arose from eating green cheese, the universal food of the inhabitants of the moon. Instead of gazing with rapture on her beautiful face, he did nothing but look at her foot, concerning which, he every now and then, made some remark, in his native tongue, to his chief counsellor and favourite, the marquis of moonshine, lord-keeper of the lost wits of all the people of this world. Being a man of inflexible honesty, he scrupulously refrained from appropriating any of these treasures to himself, although every body declared there was not a living being in the empire of the moon, that would have been more excusable for a little peculation, the marquis being, notwithstanding his high office, a most exemplary blockhead.

After the presentation there was held a great feast, during which Florella sat next the prince, and was edified by a dissertation on cookery, in which he dis-

played such erudition, that the princess ironically complimented him on his knowledge of that most important science.

"It has been my principal study during my travels," replied he, with great self-complacency, "and I intend revolutionizing the whole system, as soon as the old codger takes himself off, which I hope will be soon. It is amazing, my dear princess, what benefits are derived from travel, if a man only has his eyes about him."

Florella wondered who the prince meant by the old codger, not dreaming it was his father, for though she had seen but little of hers, she had always been accustomed to think of him with reverence and affection. The feast lasted six hours, during which, the princess became so tired, that she wished herself back in the solitary tower, listening to the chant of her little bird, and the prince ate and drank so lustily, that he became a little merry, insomuch, that he could hardly keep his eyes open, and never opened his mouth but to yawn.

When Florella retired to her splendid chamber, which was hung with blue and silver curtains, with tassels of gold thread, and furnished with a bed and chairs, covered all over with plates of burnished gold, she cast herself on the bed, and wept to think that her father had affianced her to a man, who looked as if he was made of green cheese, whom not even wine could inspire with wit or gallantry, and who thought more of a lady's foot than her head or heart.

"I wo'n't marry him, that I am resolved," cried she, firmly and aloud.

"But you must, my princess," replied the old governess, who had just entered. "Young ladies who have the happiness to be born princesses, must neither consult their heart or their understanding. They must marry for the good of their subjects, and after having made this sacrifice, they are held excusable for never paying any attention to their happiness in future. You belong to the kingdom, and must marry solely for the public good.

"Alas!" cried Florella, "am I never to be free? must I always be either shut up in a high tower, or fettered in bondage with a man I despise? O! that I were one of my father's handmaids, rather than the slave of his policy."

"And would I were in your place," thought the old governess. "I would marry the old man in the moon himself, to be young again, and reign over kingdoms."

Florella found that she had gained nothing but addi-

tional cares by her release from the solitary tower. There at least she enjoyed repose, and was free from the irksome yoke of inflexible etiquette. She was now the slave of one unvarying round of heartless nothingness. She was the victim of a perpetual discipline, applied to teach her the precise measure of civility and condescension due to people of every rank; every courtesy must be graduated by rule, and whether she loved or hated, her deportment must be the same. Neither her heart nor her understanding was permitted the least relaxation from the restraint of sleepless hypocrisy; she could neither dress or undress, eat or drink, except according to the canons of court etiquette, and was every day condemned to sit at table for hours, when she would ten thousand times rather have been luxuriating among the flowers of the garden, or rambling in the woods, where she might enjoy the sweets of liberty. One thing alone

consoled her: the young prince of the moon troubled her but little with his attentions. The matter was settled that she was to become his wife, so soon as the preparations were finished, and the articles of settlement made out; and the prince, in the meantime, to dissipate his ennui, amused himself by paying devoted attention to one of Florella's maids-of-honour, who, as in duty bound, received his devoirs with exemplary docility.

Thus stood affairs, when, in order to divert his illustrious guest, the great king (whose name, owing to the malice of the poets and historians, is lost in oblivion) decreed a great hunt in the neighbouring forest, which abounded in lions, tigers, wild boars, and other pleasant game for royal sportsmen. As was the custom of the kingdom, all the ladies, and Florella among the rest, attended, dressed in courtly hunting-suits, and mounted on prancing palfreys, led by pages, whose duty it was, to conduct them out of all danger from the rage of wild beasts. The young prince of the moon, as a pretended mark of gallantry, insisted on being Florella's page on this occasion, that he might watch over her safety; but the truth was, he had a mortal antipathy to the faces of lions, tigers, and boars, and chose to remain where there was the least danger of encountering them. Florella had rather have seen him in the jaws of a lion, than leading her palfrey; but she was told it was in accordance with etiquette, and for the good of the kingdom, and nothing more could be said on the subject. Again

she sighed for the liberty of doing as she pleased, and wished herself the daughter of a peasant, rather than a king.

At the first peep of dawn, the hunters and their steeds, the ladies, their palfreys and pages, set forth to the sound of trumpets and horns, mingled with the baying of the deep-mouthed hounds, that echoed through the depths of the forest, warning their shaggy

tenants of the coming danger. It was a goodly and a splendid sight, to behold the gallant array of armed princes, nobles, and steeds, glittering in the rich caparisons of those days, mingled with blithesome damsels, all of whom could truly boast, that their ancestors came over to the kingdom in Noah's ark. Among

these last, Florella shone with unrivalled splendour of dress as well as beauty, and all the court ladies envied her the devoirs of the young prince of the moon, who did nothing but turn to look first at the maid-of-honour, and then at Florella's foot, the point of which peeped modestly forth from her gorgeous garments. So intensely was he employed in these courtly devotions, that it so happened he had the misfortune to plunge up to the knees in a slough, by which, his spangled shoes, and silken hose, were grievously defiled. Whereupon he inwardly cursed his stars, and lamented that ever he was born.

The company had now approached the recesses of the forest, where the grim ferocious tenants were wont to abide, in the midst of briers, tangled vines, and hoary rocks, heaped in wild confusion, or rising above the lofty trees in perpendicular walls, bidding defiance alike to the influence of time and the efforts of man. The dogs began now to snuff the air, and give the loud signal of preparation, while horse and man arranged themselves for the approaching trial. Presently, the pack set up a universal chorus, and dashed into the wild scene before them, where their cries echoed, and re-echoed among the hoary rocks and solitary glens of the lonely forest. They were followed by the hunters, while the courtly cavaliers arranged themselves in parties, at the outlets of the glen, where they supposed the wild beasts would make their exit, when hard pressed, and the pages led their palfreys where they might see the sport without sharing the

danger. While thus disposed, the peculiar yelping of the hounds, announced the discovery of their prey, and the increasing clamour proclaimed the approach to that quarter in which the courtly train, with the king

at their head, awaited, with gallant ardour, the appearance of the savage recreants. The spears trembled, the bright swords glittered, and the arrows were drawn to their heads, while the pack was chasing its prey around

the gloomy refuge it had chosen, extending the circle at each succeeding revolution, and evidently approaching nearer every time. All now remained in eager expectation of the appearance of some savage beast, emerging from his retreat, and every heart beat either with exultation or fear. The prince zealously retained the bridle of Florella's palfrey, but it was observed, that he disposed himself at the tail of the animal, instead of its head, as he affirmed, that by this means he could the more effectually restrain him from running away at the sight of the ferocious animal, now evidently approaching nigher and nigher.

At this moment, there rushed from out the rocky glen a huge boar, with ivory tusks projecting from his foaming jaws, eyes darting fire, and bristles erected on his back like the quills of the porcupine. The instant he appeared, a hundred hissing spears and whizzing arrows were darted at his impenetrable hide, some of which flew wide of their mark, and others recoiled as from a rock. One spear alone penetrated his shoulder and roused the animal to a rage that conquered his fears, in the agony of pain. He rushed towards the assembled throng, which, under the influence of panic, or impelled by the unseen dominion of the fairy godmother for purposes of her own, dispersed in every direction, leaving the ladies and their palfreys to take care of themselves, or to the guidance of their pages, who scampered away into the recesses of the forest, as fast as their legs could carry them, and disappeared.

The enraged beast—after standing at bay with the hounds, and goring them so sorely with his ivory tusks, that at length, one by one, they sneaked away—paused for a moment, looking round with eyes glaring with fury. The only living objects now in sight, were Florella and her little palfrey, both equally congealed with fear, and incapable of stirring from the spot. On the first appearance of the boar, the prince of the moon had dropped the reins of the palfrey, and betaking himself to his heels, climbed a high tree, where he remained ensconced among the branches, and trembling like the leaves around him. The wounded beast, after eying the princess with malignant fury for a little while, approached rapidly, whetting his tusks, and chewing the foam. The little palfrey shook with trembling terror, under his fears, and not his burden, while Florella, as she gazed with horror on the monster, gradually lost all recollection, and fell to the earth.

At one and the same instant, the boar dashed towards his prostrate victim, and a figure darted from the opposite quarter, and placing himself before the insensible princess, stood spear in hand, waiting his nearer approach. The animal paused a moment, sprang forward, and was met by the weapon of the stranger, who, with a steady eye and nervous arm, darted it deep between the body and the shoulder-blade, where it remained quivering with the force of the blow. The savage animal uttered a horrible yell, and stood arrested in his course. The blood spouted

from his mouth, his limbs trembled, relaxed, gave way under him, and he fell dead with a howl that echoed far and wide.

Florella was roused by the appalling sound; she opened her eyes, expecting instant death, and instead of the bristly boar, beheld a youth kneeling at her side,

contemplating her pale yet beauteous face with mingled admiration and pity. In the dimness of her newly wakened senses, she at first mistook him for the prince of the moon, and was turning away in loathsome disgust. But as she recovered her sight more perfectly, she saw in his stead, a charming youth, dressed in a hunting-suit of green, who, though not clad in the courtly style, was far more graceful and dignified than her affianced husband, the recreant prince of the moon. From gazing at the stranger, she turned to look at the huge animal, that lay gasping a few paces from her, and the conviction came across her mind, that he was her deliverer. Their eyes met, and the sensation the princess that moment experienced, caused the lilies of her face to give place to blushing roses.

"Am I right?" at length she said, with trembling apprehension; "am I indebted to thee for rescue from a cruel death?" and she shuddered as she looked towards the dead monster, whose blood made the earth smoke around him. "Is it not so?" added Florella.

"The boar fell by my hand," answered the youth, modestly; "and I consider it the happiest circumstance of my life, that I have been instrumental in preserving so charming a lady." The voice was full and sweet, and the tones fell on the heart of the princess, softened as it was by the warmth of gratitude, which she expressed not more eloquently with her tongue than her eyes.

"I require no thanks, lady; my own feelings are my reward."

"But my father is rich and great."

"Indeed! who then art thou, sweet lady?"

"I am the only child of the king of this country."

"I am sorry for it," said the youth, and a cloud passed over his brow.

"Why sorry?" asked Florella, anxiously.

"Alas!" replied he, "between the peasant and the king there is an impassable barrier."

"What meanest thou?"

"Nothing," he answered, and that moment a noise was heard, which frightened the princess, so out of all sense of propriety, that she cast herself into his arms and begged him once more to become her protector.

The prince of the moon was all this while securely perched amid the branches of the royal oak, where

he had sought shelter, and now recognising, in the noises around him, the approach of the discomfited hunters, bethought himself that it was unbecoming his dignity to be found in this situation. He accordingly forthwith descended from his roost, and cautiously approaching the spot where he had left the princess to the care of the boar, beheld the monster lying dead on the ground. Whereupon, he boldly advanced, and his coming roused Florella from her resting-place, who, with many blushes, hastily withdrew from the arms of the stranger.

"Hoity-toity!" exclaimed the prince, "what is all this? and who are you that dare touch the person of the daughter, and destined wife of the Lord's anointed?"

"He saved me from the fangs of that monster, to whose mercy you so gallantly left me erewhile," replied the princess, scornfully eying the insolent prince, while the stranger looked on him with lowering contempt.

"He kill that boar!" exclaimed the prince; "that's a likely story, indeed! He is as much alive as ever he was. See! there, he is getting on his legs again, and coming towards us!" And the valiant gentleman, perceiving the dispersed hunters rapidly approaching among the trees, drew his sword, and rushing on the dead animal, began to cut and hack away in a desperate manner, while Florella and the stranger could not for their souls refrain from laughing outright.

While thus employed, the king and his retinue came up, and seeing how manfully the prince laid about him, were astonished at his valour, complimenting him, at the same time, on being the saviour of his destined bride. The more they complimented, the faster the prince repeated his blows, until at length, expressing his belief that the monster was dead, he coolly wiped the blood from his sword, and returned it to the scabbard with a look of triumph. All the courtiers flocked around him, pouring forth strains of admiration, and the king, taking the collar of the Order of the Bloody Boar, from his own, hung it round the neck

of the prince, whom he embraced, affectionately calling him the preserver of his only child, that he valued above all earthly blessings, because, without her, his kingdom would be destitute of an heir. The prince received these honours with exemplary modesty, as is customary with those who really merit them.

Florella, while she glowed with indignation, at the base assumption of the recreant prince, could, at the same time, scarcely repress her inclination to laugh, when she remembered his alacrity in running away

at the first onset of the boar. The young stranger remained leaning on his spear, which he had succeeded in drawing out, seeming too proud or too indifferent to dispute the prince's claim, yet looking so handsome, that all the damsels of the court surmised that he was a king, or the son of a king in disguise, and admired him accordingly. Ever and anon, he cast a look of such soul-withering scorn at the prince of the moon, that the doughty hero resolved on being gloriously revenged.

By the law of court etiquette, which was held the most sacred of all the laws of this ancient and mighty kingdom, it was considered a capital crime for a subject to touch a princess of the blood royal, under any circumstances whatever. No matter if her life or her honour were in most imminent jeopardy; no matter whether about to perish for lack of help, by fire, by water, or any of the accidents of life, death was the penalty of touching even the hem of her garments.

Taking advantage of this law, the prince of the moon related to the king, how, while he was contending singly, and with desperate valour, with the enraged boar, and the princess lay insensible on the ground, this low caitiff had the audacity to intrude upon her privacy, and pollute her sacred person, while thus lying at the mercy of his brutal insolence, by raising her up, and holding her encircled in his arms, while he was in such extremity with the animal, that he had no time to revenge this impious presumption.

Nothing could equal the rage of the king, and the horror of the courtiers, at hearing of this violation of the law of etiquette. His majesty ordered his gallant band of guards, called the invincibles, forthwith to seize the insolent wretch, and bind him so that he might be safely carried to the capital, there to suffer

the penalty of his crime. It was in vain that Florella passionately denied the statement of the prince, in so far as it was false, and related the cowardice of the one, the gallantry of the other. She could not controvert the assertion of her having rested on the bosom of the stranger, for she felt that she should remember it all her life, and in spite of all she could say, the decree of her father was confirmed. All be-

lieved the tale of the prince of the moon, who cunningly insinuated that the princess was not to blame, as her person had been sacrilegiously violated while she was in a state of insensibility; which would account for her mistake in supposing the boar had been slain by the insolent interloper instead of himself. What confirmed all this, was the silence of the stranger, who disdained to vindicate his claim to an act, the omission to do which, he would have considered a disgrace to his manhood. Accordingly, he was carried as a criminal, accompanied by the whole court, to the capital of the kingdom, where the prince of the moon was received with shouts of triumph, the prisoner, with curses and hisses of scorn. The people rejoiced in having so just a king to rule over them, and the prospect of so heroic a prince for his successor.

Such was the fury of the enraged king, at the indignity offered his house, that he convened the high court immediately, and causing the judges to be instructed how to decide, left them to their own deliberations. The prince of the moon, in virtue of his privilege, was permitted to give in his testimony on honour, while the word of the criminal went for nothing.

As to Florella, the sacred law of etiquette prohibited her appearance in so vulgar a place as a court of justice. The decision being made beforehand, there was no use in delaying it, and accordingly the young stranger, who had saved the life of the princess, was sentenced to death, for having touched her person.

Florella was all this time, in an agony of grief and despair. Her heart, while throbbing with gratitude for the services of the poor youth, who was now to expiate them by a cruel death, was overwhelmed with remorse for having brought the doom upon his head. Had not her foolish terror prompted her to throw herself into his arms for protection, the recreant prince of the moon would not have seen her in that situation, and the violation of etiquette had remained unknown. These feelings combined, produced another still more potent, the joint issue of pity, admiration, and gratitude. She used every effort to avert the doom of the young stranger; she threw herself at the feet of her father, who spurned her as a degenerate girl, insensible to the dignity of her birth,

and the sanctity of royalty; she besought the prince of the moon to make all the amends in his power for his falsehoods, by disclosing the truth; but that high-born and illustrious wight contented himself with expressing his astonishment at her making such a rout about a fellow that nobody knew, and who probably could not tell who was his great-grandfather. Florella gave him a look, which made him feel so disagreeably, that he was fain to go and solace himself with the favourite maid-of-honour.

Suddenly, the sorrowful princess recollected the little bird and his promise, and invoked his presence in a voice so plaintive, that the very echoes answered with a sigh. But the messenger of the fairy godmother came not, and after waiting till she was out of patience, she invoked him again. A third time she called, and the sense of her desolate state worked so painfully on her heart that she sobbed aloud. At length, she heard a rustling at her window, and opening it with eager impatience, the little bird flew in, perched on her shoulder, and, placing its golden bill close to her ear, whispered as follows :—

"What dost thou require, my princess, that thou callest on me in such tones of sorrow. Speak, that I may carry thy message to thy fairy godmother."

Florella related her story and her sorrows, apprizing the little bird, that the preserver of her life was, on the morrow, to suffer a cruel death, for having opened his arms to receive her, when she threw herself on his bosom in an agony of terror. She besought him to fly

to the fairy, and bid her in the name of her god-daughter to come to her relief, redress her wrongs, and assuage her sorrows, for she felt she could not survive her preserver, if he perished for her sake.

"Be contented, my princess," answered the little bird. "Do not despair of the help of Providence, which is ever the shield of the virtuous. Thou art good, and thou art pure, and such have ever a friend in the Giver of all good. Hope for the best, but hope humbly; go to thy rest and sleep soundly to-night, for who knows what to-morrow will bring. Farewell for a while:" and the little bird, flying out at the window, lingered for a few moments on the topmost bough of a neighbouring tree, quavering forth a song so full of triumphant felicity, that Florella became inspired with sweet and balmy hopes. She soon after laid herself quietly down in her bed, and slept so soundly, that she did not awake until the beams of the morning sun, shining full in her face, roused her to the memory of the past, the consciousness of the present, the anticipations of the future.

It was some moments before the princess recalled to mind the circumstances of the preceding day, and the situation of the youth who had saved her life, and already paid, or was about to pay, for conferring that benefit, by the sacrifice of his own. The thought brought with it a gush of tears, at the same time that it roused her to a last effort for his preservation. Starting up, she called her attendants, but none came; and after waiting a few moments in agonizing impatience,

she resolved to dress herself. On looking round, however, she could discover no other garments, but such as country-maids are accustomed to wear, and which

appeared so coarse and unseemly that she could not find in her heart to put them on, even if she had known how. While standing in this state of perplex-

ity, she cast her eyes around, and was struck with the appearance of her chamber, which was exceedingly small, and furnished in the most plain and simple style. Confounded and alarmed at the change, she remained bewildered and at a loss, until warned by a strange voice without, saying: "Come, my little damsel, it is high time to get up, and milk the cows; don't you hear them calling to you?" and, sure enough, she heard them lowing close under the window.

"Where am I, and what has happened to me?" exclaimed the princess, and running to the window, looked out on a scene so strange, yet so fair and cheerful, that she paused to gaze on it with delight. A wide range of country spread before her, basking in the bright rays of the sun, and glittering in the jewels of the dewy morning. Cultivated fields, green meadows enamelled with flowers, and woods waving in the summer zephyrs, lay mixed together in all the graceful harmony of nature. Flocks of sheep spread themselves here and there, animating the hills; herds of cattle lay ruminating in lazy luxury under the shady elms; groups of merry children were sporting at the doors of white-washed cottages that dotted the landscape; the birds were singing their morning salutations, the milkmaids their rustic love-ditties, the ploughmen whistling their way to their daily labours, and just at the foot of the hill where stood her new abode, a little winding stream glittered among the grass and trees, lending its murmurs to the universal chorus of nature. Every thing around her seemed

free and happy, and for a little while her spirit joined in gentle concert with all these delicious harmonies.

"Do I dream," at length she said, "or have I travelled in my sleep to a new and more beautiful world?"

She was answered by her little bird, which poured forth one of his most delightful and animated strains, from a bush laden with a thousand moss-roses, some

just in the bud, some half expanded, others spread out in all their rich exuberance, sparkling with dew-drops and diffusing more than the fragrance of Araby the blessed, through the surrounding air. When he had finished his song, he bathed his bosom in the dewy sweets, that lingered in the rosy recesses of the flowers, and shivering his feathers in ecstasy, flitted in at the window, greeting her lips with a kiss of his golden bill.

" How likest thou thy new abode, my princess? dost thou think thou canst be happy here, in the enjoyment of repose and liberty, wait on thyself, and be useful to others?"

" What dost thou mean, my little bird?" asked the princess in wonder. " Where am I, and to what purpose have I been brought hither?"

"To be happy, if thou deservest to be so. Thou art now in the New World, far distant from kings and court etiquette, where to be useful is to be dignified; and where, when thy duties are performed to thyself and others, thou mayest, without fear or reproach, enjoy all innocent sports and recreations, relieved from the chains that have fettered thy youthful spirit, and made thee a slave to all those artificial restraints, from which the rest of thy fellow-creatures are free."

"O happy, happy change!" exclaimed the princess, in ecstasy, "but the recreant prince of the moon, shall I be free from his odious persecutions?"

"For ever, my princess, if thou performest thy duties in thy new station."

"But—but—the stranger who saved my life," said Florella, with blushing hesitation.—"Yet, alas! why do I ask of him? doubtless, before this, he has laid down his life for having given me mine:" and the young princess melted into tears.

"He lives, and thou wilt see him again, on the same conditions which shall free thee for ever from the prince of the moon."

"And my father?" said Florella, anxiously.

"Seek to know no more, until the period comes. Adieu, my princess, it is time to go forth and milk the cows." Just then, the same voice was heard calling on her, chiding her delay, but not in anger. "Go," said the little bird, "it is the voice of thy protector, in whose care the fairy hath placed thee, and for whose kindness, thou wilt owe obedience, gratitude, and af-

fection. See that thou payest the debt, or the forfeit will be the loss of thy happiness. Farewell, till I see thee again? Shouldst thou become tired of thy new abode, call on thy godmother, and she will restore thee to the court of thy father."

The little bird flitted away, and Florella having spent rather a long time arraying herself, for it was an awkward business to one who had heretofore depended on others for assistance, in the most insignificant offices—Florella went forth, and met without the door, a staid and venerable matron, decked in homely yet cleanly weeds, with a countenance full of cheerful benevolence, and eyes that sparkled even among wrinkles.

"Well, my daughter," said she, "you have overslept yourself this morning, the cows are waiting for you. But I suppose you are tired with your long journey, and will be earlier to-morrow. Yonder is the milk-pail, and you must bestir yourself, for we shall get no breakfast, except from the cows."

Florella went forth, ashamed, not that the task of milking alarmed her pride, but that she was conscious of her entire incapacity to fulfil it. The cows snuffed their noses at her appearance, and when she essayed to extract the milky store, sidled away, as if impatient at her awkwardness. In short, she could make nothing of it, and they were likely to have no breakfast if it depended on her. The old woman, who was waiting her progress, at length came up, laughing at her ill success, and saying she was likely to have but an awkward milkmaid. After which, she seated herself on a little bench, and bidding Florella take good notice, finished the milking without any difficulty.

They then went in to breakfast, and the little fatigue Florella had undergone, joined to the wholesome freshness of the morning air, gave her such an appetite, that she ate more than became the daughter of a great king, or than the sacred law of court etiquette allowed, at the court of her father.

When the wholesome morning meal was done, the old woman instructed her in various household duties of a light and cheerful kind, and though Florella failed in some, and performed others in an imperfect manner, the good old soul, instead of scolding or finding fault

with her wretched bringing up, encouraged her by the assurance that she could very soon learn to do better. When the cottage was fairly put to rights, she told the princess she might go forth into the fields, and amuse herself in any manner she pleased. Accordingly, Florella, tying on a little straw hat, which she could scarcely feel on her head, went forth on a ramble beside the stream that meandered through the meadows at the foot of the hills. Here she met little children of the neighbouring houses, sporting or fishing, or playing off their various gambols, and such was the smiling welcome she ever bore in her face, that they did not avoid, but approached her, with innocent freedom, asking her name, where she came from, and bringing her bouquets of wild flowers, which grew on the banks of the stream.

There was a playful freedom, devoid of forward impudence, in the words and actions of these little urchins, so different from the fawning servility to which she had been all her life accustomed, that though at first it seemed strange, if not offensive, soon pleased by its native charm, and blithesome hilarity. In a little while, Florella found herself joining in their sportive gambols, associating herself in their rural pursuits, and sharing in all their hopes and fears. When she left them, they told her she must come again, and bring a basket which they would fill with flowers.

The princess returned home pleased and happy, that she had found companions, who were not her

slaves, and in whose presence she could follow the impulses of her heart, or the caprices of her fancy, free from the cobweb toils, which had hitherto fettered her on every side. Day after day, week after week, glided away, during which Florella rapidly improved in domestic skill, most especially in milking the cows, who actually seemed now to welcome her coming, until at length the old dame, whom she called her mother, and who deserved the title by her kindness, declared, that she would be a treasure to any farmer's son in twenty miles round, who wanted an industrious, frugal, sweet-tempered wife. The step of the princess became every day more light and elastic; deeper and deeper was the tint of the roses on her cheek, while her waking thoughts—save now and then, a single recollection, that ever brought forth a quivering sigh—were full of happiness, and her nights occupied in balmy rest or happy dreams.

At length, at the expiration of six months from the transformation of Florella, the old woman fell desperately ill, and, for several weeks, lay helpless on her bed of pain. During all this time, the princess attended her with the kindest care, the most gentle, tender, and unabating assiduity. By day, she employed herself in administrating to the pains of sickness, and the infirmities of age; by night, she sat at the bedside, watching, weeping, and praying, for the blessing of Heaven on her endeavours. By degrees, her soothing cares, and tender attentions, proved successful. The aged sufferer at length was able to arise from her bed

of anguish, and to thank her careful nurse, that she was still in the land of the living. She embraced her with tears of gratitude, blessed her in words of warm sincerity, and over and over predicted that Heaven would reward her for her kindness. The little bird also frequently cheered Florella, with his song, and at length, one day flew in at the window, lighted on her shoulder, and whispered in her ear:—

"Well done, my princess, thy reward is at hand."

The good old woman insisted that Florella should go forth, that she might, by partaking in the fresh air, recover her activity and spritefulness. Accordingly, she put on her little straw bonnet, and sought her usual walk along the bank of the little twittering stream, where the young children were delighted to see her again, and gathered wreaths of flowers, which they entreated her to wear on her head. In a

little while, she was more charming than ever, and more happy, too, in the consciousness of having paid the debt of gratitude to her kind protector.

One bright summer morning, she wandered away to her favourite retreat, a little cascade buried deep in a shady glen, through which the crystal stream had, in the lapse of ages, worn its way, now tumbling over precipices, and anon foaming among the rocks, that were green with moss and clambering vines.

Here, seated on the edge of a little crystal basin, at the foot of the cascade, in which the speckled trout might ever and anon be seen, darting at the little heedless flies that fell upon its surface, Florella sunk into a deep revery, in which the past was reflected on her mind, even as the rocks and trees were reflected in the glassy pool. Mellowed by time and distance, the images of her father, of his court, and of every thing connected with her past existence, appeared and disappeared like the pageants of a dream, and caused neither regret for their absence, or anxiety for their return. One recollection, and one alone, created pain, and that was of the youth in the hunter's suit of green, who had laid her under obligations, she feared he would never give her an opportunity to repay, and whom she longed to see once more, if only to thank him. She sighed deeply at the recollection of the few fleeting moments, when she lay trembling in his arms, felt his heart beat against hers, and in the midst of her terrors, was happier than she ever was before.

While her spirit was thus, as it were, absent from

its tenement of clay, expatiating in the past, and seeking to pry into the future, she was awakened to a sense of the present, by the barking of a dog upon the top of the precipice, over which the waters plunged,

and looking up, beheld the figure of a man in green, eagerly bending over, as if watching her motions with extreme interest. At first, she felt alarmed, and

hastily rising, was about to leave the spot, when a second look revealed to her heart the youth of her contemplations, and caused its pulses to beat with new rapidity.

"Florella," exclaimed the youth, in a voice trembling with eagerness, "do not fly. If my presence is painful, I will retire as I came, content with having seen you once more. Fare thee well," added he, in a saddened tone, as he perceived her going away, "Fare thee well; I leave you in safety, since there are no ravenous beasts to molest you in these innocent retreats."

The heart of the princess smote her with a feeling of ingratitude, for the conclusion of his speech had recalled more vividly the obligations she owed him.

"Stay," cried she, with deep blushes and panting hesitation, "stay and receive my thanks, for it cannot be a sin against modesty to express our gratitude."

In a moment, the stranger youth was at her side. Florella thanked him for saving her life, with all the warmth of an innocent heart, and the youth assured her that the obligation was conferred on himself, since it had ever been to him a source of unbounded happiness. Having lightened her bosom of its load of gratitude, one might have thought Florella would have been satisfied and went her way. But some how or other, they had so much to say besides, that neither seemed to think of parting. The princess related her mysterious change from the heiress of a kingdom to the maid of an old peasant-woman, and the youth, who

announced his name as Armine, declared that their fates seemed united, for he had been delivered from death in the same mysterious manner, by a midnight conveyance to his home. The princess blushed at

this allusion to a community of fate, and Armine contemplated her with such speaking looks, that she turned away her face, and seemed gazing at the foaming torrent at her feet.

Florella learned that he was an inhabitant of the neighbourhood, and so significantly looked her wonder at not having seen him before, that he answered her silence, by saying: "It was forbidden." Florella blushed ten times redder than before, and rising, turned herself towards home. Armine attempted to follow, and the princess staid him by waving her hand for his departure. But he persisted in following at her side, and such was the roughness of the path, that she was often obliged to let him take her hand, in order to guide her in safety, and if on these occasions he squeezed it too tightly, the princess ascribed it to necessity rather than presumption. The first step is every thing, and Armine, without any farther opposition, accompanied Florella home, where he was welcomed by the dame as an old acquaintance.

From this time, scarcely a day passed, in which they failed to meet by a thousand of those inscrutable accidents which the world calls fate, but which youths and young maidens, learning the first rudiments of love, know full well are the result of a common sympathy, by which they are irresistibly drawn together by the chords of their hearts. Armine had long looked his love, and the princess blushed hers, ere he found words to declare his passion: he received his answer in a silence, more expressive, a thousand times, than all the babbling eloquence of the deceitful tongue. Remembering the wise old saying, that "silence gives consent," Armine folded the princess in his arms: the throbbing of their hearts, recalled to her mind, the rescue from the ferocious boar, and as Florella returned the embrace, she persuaded herself it was only a tribute to gratitude.

At this moment, they were startled by the appearance of a little woman, about three feet high, riding on a rainbow, and decked in more than its celestial radiance. She sailed towards them, until the beautiful arch, seemed to bend just over their heads, and enclose them within its dazzling semicircle. For a little while they stood in silent wonder, not altogether unmixed with apprehension, when the fairy of the rainbow, who was no other than Florella's godmother, addressed them as follows, in a voice sweeter than that of the sweetest-toned woman :—

"Florella, thou hast tasted of life at both extremes of the fountain. Thou hast learned what wealth,

power, and honours can give, and what are the blessings of a life of innocent freedom, joined with the discharge of those duties which all mankind owe to each other. Choose now, and choose for ever, whether thou wilt be a queen, or a free tenant of this land of liberty, where thou and thy posterity for long ages to come, shall enjoy those rights, which, though bestowed by omnipotence, are filched away by his creature, man. Choose now, and for ever."

"If my father could come and enjoy the same happiness," replied Florella.

"Thy father," replied the fairy of the rainbow, "lives and reigns no more. He died months ago; but the people await thy appearance, and will submit to thy authority. Wilt thou return and reign over them?"

"Never!" replied the princess, firmly. "When I remember the buoyant health, the cheerful spirits, the innocent freedom I have enjoyed in this land of liberty, and contrast it with the thousand vexatious restraints, the cumbrous splendours, straight-laced etiquette, desperate ennui, and little envious, malignant passions of a court; when I recall all these, my choice is made. I will stay where I am, and share with the rest of my fellow-creatures, what God has given equally to all."

Armine, who had watched, with breathless impatience, and trembling apprehension, the decision of Florella, at the conclusion of this declaration, threw himself at her feet, and thanked her in words of grate-

ful eloquence that she had not made choice of a station that would have for ever separated his lot from hers. The fairy, too, contemplated her with looks of affectionate approbation, and replied in these encouraging words :—

"Thy choice is wise, my daughter, and thou shalt be rewarded for having learned to administer to the happiness of others, by being happy thyself. Know that thou art the grand-daughter of the old dame under whose protection thou hast lately lived, and that a malignant fairy, being offended with thy mother, stole thee away, and as a punishment, sought to make thee perpetually miserable by passing thee off for the daughter of a king. Thou art now, through thy own wise choice, restored to thy former state, and nothing now remains but to complete thy happiness. Come hither, Armine, and my daughter."

The youthful pair approached; the fairy bent down, joined their hands, blessed them, and rising on the beams of the rainbow, disappeared in the blue distance of the boundless sky. Florella, with the joyful assent of her grandmother, was soon united to Armine, with whom she passed a life of such joyous freedom, sweetened and mingled with useful occupations, that a thousand times she asked herself, for what unheard-of crimes, Providence should punish people by entailing on them and their posterity, the miseries of kingly power and courtly etiquette.

The prince of the moon, on the disappearance of Florella, returned to his empire, accompanied by the

favourite maid-of-honour, and on the death of the emperor, who was called by way of distinction, the man in the moon, played such enormous pranks of tyranny, that the fairy of the rainbow, whose power extended over all that planet, changed him into a vast green cheese, and his people, for one hundred years, were permitted to prey upon him, as he had preyed on them.

THE PHILOSOPHER

AND FAIRY RING.

A TALE

UPON A TIME THERE LIVED

who having nothing useful to keep him out of idleness, took it into his head to make war on ignorance and superstition; and to account for every thing he saw, on the principles of science and philosophy. Whenever he

found himself unable to do this, he would not believe his own eyes, much less those of other people. Most especially he denounced the agency of ghosts, genii, magicians and fairies in the affairs of mankind, and not being able to reconcile the existence of spiritual beings to his notions of the organization of matter, sometimes came very near denying that of a Supreme Being. "A cause without a cause, is no cause at all," said he, to himself, "and of nothing can come nothing."

Most invariably did he make desperate war against the fairies, to whom he had taken a mortal antipathy, seeing he had invented several excellent theories, not one word of which the people would believe, while at the same time, they placed implicit faith in the gambols of the little elfin race. This made him jealous, and he determined to demonstrate the impossibility of their existence, on the principles of science and philosophy. He wrote a great folio, which being read by about one person out of a thousand had no great effect on the other nine hundred and ninety-nine, who remained in all the bliss of ignorance, and he was astonished to find the people continued to believe in the fairies, just as they did before. One day an honest countryman came to him to inquire the reason why a salt-water fish was always fresh, and was going away, after receiving an explanation, which puzzled him more than ever, saying as he went out, "after all, I reckon it is because God pleases it should be so." "What's that you say, you ignorant blockhead? Did'nt

I tell you it was the law of nature ?" And thereupon he seized the great book he had written against the fairies, and threw it at the head of the poor countryman, who

if he had not dodged on one side, would have fared rather indifferently. As it was, he ran away as fast as his heels would carry him, and told all his neighbours, the philosopher had gone mad. "Ah!" said an old man of fourscore and ten, who was reckoned an oracle, though he could neither read nor write—"Ah! this learning is a terrible thing. I never knew any good come from it, not I. Some how or other, I think it only blinds people to what is, and makes them see what is not."

All this time the fairies had their eyes on the philosopher, and determined to be even with him one of these days, unless he ceased his warfare against their ancient dominion over the minds of men. Finding that the obstinate old gentleman continued his attacks with more virulence than ever, a council was called, in a little fairy ring, to consider the best mode of punishment. Every body knows that a fairy ring is a circular plot of grass, round which is a line seemingly occasioned by the application of fire.

The spot was situated in one of those delightful solitudes the fairies love. It was a little basin embodied among hills and woods, in which was a clear spring, whose white sands danced in its bottom, as the crystal waters welled from the bosom of the earth beneath. It was their favourite place of resort, and here they held a council to decide in what manner they should punish this doting, foolish, old fellow, who would not believe his own eyes.

The affair would soon have been settled, if the little assemblage had not all talked at once, which, as experience shows, is not the best way of despatching business. Where there are no listeners, arguments are very apt to be thrown away; and where every one holds a different opinion, it is very difficult to come to a decision. Much time was accordingly spent in devising various modes of punishing the old philosopher, each one of which, though it would have been equally effectual, was opposed by all but the mover. Matters were getting into great confusion, when a venerable

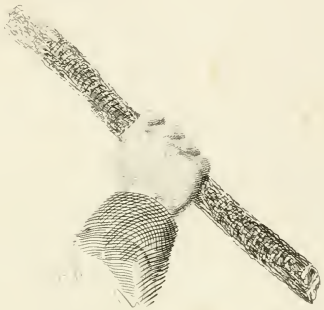
old fairy who usually presided over the assemblages of the little elfin band, on account of having a sharp shrill voice, louder than all the rest, rose, in somewhat of a passion, and adjusting her hood with special regard to the dignity of her station, called them to order, with such energy that she made more

noise than all the rest put together. This shows that old women should always stay at home, and mind their own business, instead of meddling with that of other people, seeing that old fools are the most desperate fools in the world, for there is no hope of their ever living to become wiser.

It should have been premised, that the community of fairies, of which I am speaking, was a republic, situated somewhere in the great western continent, whither they had been driven by the persecutions of science and philosophy. It was composed of emigrants from all parts of fairy land, in the known world, who had united together for defence against their great enemies, the philosophers, and never agreed in ONE point since that time. There were some genii, and magicians, from the east, among them, but these were not permitted to say a word, as it was a fundamental principle of their government, that the women should do all the talking. The genii and magicians submitted with rather a bad grace, but could do nothing, in a community where the only privilege of the minority was to pocket every thing but their own money.

Various were the projects discussed with great force and eloquence, which was almost a pity, since nobody heard them. A little fairy from Persia, insisted on having the philosopher impaled alive; another suggested the propriety of banishing him to the old world, where he would entirely lose his wits, in studying Phrenology and Animal Magnetism; a third, strenuously recommended his being condemned to search all his life for the philosopher's stone; another that he should undergo the infliction of being made to believe what he could not account for; a fourth insisted on making him a politician, and getting him abused by both parties; a fifth enforced the propriety of setting the critics at his great book; and lastly, a plump little

rosy-cheeked Irish fairy, as full of mischief and hilarity as she could hold, earnestly, and with great force of argument, recommended the immortal shillelah, for



there was more real virtue in that than in all the magicians' rods that ever grew out of a conjurer's beard.

There was some considerable disposition to discuss the propriety of appointing a committee to inquire into the constitutionality of this comparison between the shillelah and the magician's rod, as well as the truth of the fact of its ever having been known to grow out of a conjurer's beard. Long and interesting debates arose, in which the nature and properties of the shillaleh were minutely analyzed, and its origin discussed with vast learning and research. This led to an inquiry into the relative force of reason and the cudgel as instruments for governing mankind; which led to a disquisition on the difference between instinct and

reason; which naturally conducted them to the subject of horses and cattle which, by direct inference, led to raising wheat and tobacco; which again led to an inquiry into the abominable practice of smoking, together with the best mode of baking buckwheat cakes, and whether this was best done in this state or any other. This led to a discussion of State Rights; which led to various eloquent declamations, which ended at last in loud calls of "Question! Question!" But no question could be found in the variety of topics that had been discussed, and the old fairy, who, by common consent, presided over their deliberations, put on her spectacles to look for it.

A long while elapsed before it could be found; but, at length, a little Greek fairy, who had spent much of her time in the Cretan labyrinth, ferreted it out, to the great content of all the rest, who had begun to grow weary; for even fairies become tired of talking at last, although, like their sister Echo, they always like to have the last word.

But the finding of the question did not seem likely to facilitate the decision, for many had been led so far astray, that they doubted whether they had found the right one, and this again led to a great deal of talking to very little purpose, except wasting time, which, to be sure, is of no great consequence to the fairies, who have nothing to do but to dance by the light of the moon and stars; gather together in whispering groves to watch unseen the rural lovers

on their lonely rambles ; bask on the brink of some clear crystal spring or murmuring brook and admire themselves in its glassy mirror ; plot mischief against wicked wights that do ill offices to their neighbours, punish the bad children, and reward those who obey their parents and love one another. They are, indeed, a delightful race of little beings, that never did any harm in this world, although they have been much scandalized by evil tongues, and it may safely be said that the world has grown little wiser or better since they became objects of persecution to the philosophers.— But enough of this. The fairies were about to adjourn for want of a quorum, when the sergeant-at-arms, who had been stationed on the lookout, to prevent them from being intruded upon, came in out of breath, and announced the approach of the philosopher.

Hereupon there was an end of all speeches, resolutions, motions and committees. With one accord, the whole assembly resolved itself into invisibility, and separating in little groups, peeping from among the grass, or in the whispering branches of the trees, awaited the approach of their enemy. The philosopher came walking slowly along, pondering on the deplorable ignorance of the great mass of mankind, who had no other grounds of belief than their own experience, and the evidence of their senses. In the vanity of his heart he plumed himself by a comparison with those beneath, instead of those above him and forgot that he was a thousand degrees farther below Infinite Wisdom, than the mass of mankind was below himself.

As he thus passed along, his attention was arrested by the ring in which the fairy rout had just been holding their council. "Ah!" said the philosopher, "here is one of the evidences of human folly and credulity. It is here that if we believe the vulgar, the fairies dance their merry gambols by moonlight. I should like to see them, not that I would believe it if I did, for such a conclusion would be unphilosophical." At

this moment, the fairies, as if by one impulse, assumed their forms again, and dashing into the ring, began dancing an airy round, with all their tiny might. They

crossed hands, twined their arms, achieved the pigeon-wing, the partridge-run, and all the triumphs of the art with which Celeste, and others delight the refined audiences of the good city of Gotham, to the great credit of the sex, and improvement of public taste and morals. The Persian fairy, emulated the feats of the dancing girls of the east; the Scots lassie achieved a strathpsey; the little redhaired Irish sprite capered an Irish jig; and a deputy from the forest of Fontainebleau, displayed herself in a style that some of the more discreet fairies thought not quite decent.

Surely, thought the little rabble rout, this will be sufficient for this unbelieving sinner; he cannot doubt the evidence of his senses. But they reckoned without their host. The philosopher had no more faith in his eyes than a blind man. "Verily," murmured he, aloud, "some ignorant people, the dupes of their five senses, would actually believe they had seen what I have seen, but I am not to be deluded in this manner. I maintain that the existence of fairies is impossible, and that these rings so far from being made by them, as the vulgar believe, are caused by lightning or mushrooms, or toad-stools, or some other species of fungii—or something or other."

"It is false!" exclaimed one of the fairies who had taken the likeness of a great toad-stool.

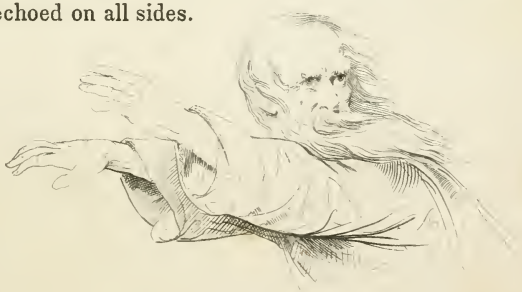
The philosopher gazed around him, but the fairy rout had disappeared, almost despairing of converting this unbeliever, even by the aid of the Missionary Societies.

" Pooh !" said he, at length, " here is another proof of the delusion of the senses. If I were as ignorant and superstitious as the vulgar, I should really believe I heard some one contradict me ; but as I see no one, it is impossible I should hear any one, for, that invisible beings speak, is an opinion altogether unphilosophical."

While he was speaking thus, the mushroom gradually expanded till it grew as high as a man, and as broad as an umbrella, and advancing towards the philosopher, covered him from the rays of the sun in the politest possible manner.

" Strange, " said he, " if it were not unphilosophical, I should be almost inclined to believe what I see. Surely I have fallen asleep and am dreaming, or am subjected to some supernatural influence." Here the philosopher began to be rather vulgar, for he was resorting to a cause to account for his present state, which he could not prove had an existence.

His obstinate unbelief provoked the fairies almost beyond endurance. "By the holy poker!" cried the little Irish sprite, "but if he don't believe his eyes, I'll try what the sense of feeling will do." So she let fly a large potato, with such excellent aim, that it encountered the philosopher's mouth, which was just opening to continue his speculations, and knocked out two of his front teeth, which to be sure were none of the soundest. This was followed by a shower of huge acorns, potatoes and fairy stones, which bruised him sorely, insomuch that he essayed to screen himself under the great toad-stool. But it all at once vanished and left him exposed to the storm of missiles. The philosopher cried out, "wonderful! it cannot be, it is unphilosophical, and therefore impossible" the word was cut short by a discharge of fairy stones, which appealed so successfully to his sense of feeling, that he actually yielded to it what he had denied to the other senses, and taking to his heels scampered away towards home, followed by a strange laugh which echoed on all sides.



The philosopher sat himself down in his study, and opening his huge folio of arguments against the existence of these troublesome fairies, soon convinced himself that all he had seen and heard, was either a dream or a deception of those rascally cheats the five senses. "It is impossible," said he; "it is much more philosophical to disbelieve what cannot be proved to exist, than to believe what is unphilosophical." He then looked in the glass, and discovered that his face was not only spotted with black and blue bruises, but that two of his front teeth were missing. This puzzled him not a little, and he was on the point of going forth among his neighbours, and telling the whole story, when the huge folio rose up against him, and he resolved to preserve his consistency. "It is of no consequence,' thought he, "whether fairies exist or not; but it is of great consequence to be consistent." Accordingly he set himself to work, and wrote another book, in which he exemplified the credulity of the vulgar, by placing a poor man precisely in the predicament through which he himself had just passed, and attempted to explain the whole on philosophical principles.

The fairies were still more exasperated than ever, at this contumacy, and determined to be revenged in a manner before unheard of, in the annals of fairy land. But while they were debating a plan for this purpose, in which not two of them could agree, the philosopher saved them the trouble. The result of his cogitations on the adventure of the fairy ring, was a determina-

tion to believe in nothing but what he could account for, on the principles of science and philosophy, and in order to qualify himself for the great task of separating truth from error, proceeded forthwith to subject every thing he saw to this new test of truth.

The first thing that puzzled him, was the mystery of his own existence, which he attempted to demonstrate in various ways, none of which proved satisfactory. The consciousness of being, he considered but a poor argument, inasmuch as it could not be demonstrated; and a self-evident fact was to his mind no evidence at all. At length, he hit, as he thought, on a most satisfactory solution, in the shape of a two-legged syllogism. "I think, therefore I exist," said he. But while chuckling over this discovery, and enjoying his new-found being, the demon of doubt whispered, "What better proof have you of your thinking, than of your existing?" Whereupon the philosopher relapsed into doubt again, and resolved to subject the matter to the test of actual experiment.

"The cessation of life," quoth he, "is the best proof of having once existed. I will die to satisfy myself that I have actually lived." Accordingly he adopted a system of starvation, which being slow in the process, would allow him an opportunity of making various philosophical deductions, as to the phenomena of dying. By degrees he grew both hungry, as well as thirsty, and was sorely tempted to eat and drink, until he reflected that he could not actually demonstrate that he was either one or the other. He decided

therefore, that it would be quite unphilosophical to yield to an imaginary necessity. By degrees, as his weakness increased, the keenness of his sufferings diminished in proportion, and at length the emaciated philosopher became thoroughly convinced, that the sensations of hunger and thirst, could not be proved to have an existence by any genuine philosophical deduction from demonstrative principles. What seemed the more to convince him of this, was the conduct of the fairies on this occasion. In order to fortify him in the opinion that hunger and thirst were all fancy, as he lay almost helpless on his pillow, with misty eyes, through which every object seemed dancing before him in the maze of visionary uncertainty, and his brain whirling in the dizzy mazes of madness, they would circle in airy rounds about his bed, in a thousand fantastic forms, such as flit before the eye of the nervous patient, in huge unnatural deformity, now towards, and anon receding, like shadows of infernal growth. If the philosopher had believed the evidence of his senses, in relation to his being hungry or athirst, he would have been obliged for the sake of consistency, to give credence to these fantastic images, and accordingly he settled the matter by disbelieving in both.

At length he was reduced to the last extremity. He became a shadow in form, a wreck in intellect. He died, and the last gleam of intelligence lighted forth, in these trembling words, as heard by the "good people," who were gathered about him, enjoying the spectacle of his gradual dissolution:—"I am satisfied

now ; but what a pity I cannot benefit by the conviction, and live to settle this long mooted question, by demonstrating in my death, that I have actually existed." Thus the fairies were revenged, and a warning example given, of the deplorable consequences of doubting the evidences of our own senses, most especially, in regard to fairy land.

THE HUNCHBACK

AND BEAUTY.

LONG WHILE AGO in a certain place, which lies at a great distance from any other spot in the known world, there bubbled forth a clear, crystal spring, in a charming recess among the wooded hills. It was more than two hundred yards around and the sands at its bottom were as white as the driven snow. The waters were

more transparent than those of Lake George, and the little air bubbles might be seen shooting upwards from the bottom in long, bright, spiral streaks. All around was quiet and repose, for no one resided there but the solitary nymph, whose plaintive voice resounds to every call, and who to the infinite credit of her sex, was never known to contradict any one, even when they derided her beauty. I call her a nymph, in respect to classic lore, but she was in reality a Fairy, who having offended one of greater power, by maintaining the superiority of black eyes and black hair, over blue eyes and yellow hair, caused violent commotion in fairy land. Two great parties arose, called the black and blue roses; one comprehending the black, the other the blue eyes, and the contest was aggravated, by several mischievous poets, who ever and anon, composed lamentable ditties in praise of their favourite colour. At length, however, the blue eyes being the most numerous, triumphed; and in a great battle in which eye-shot were used for the first time, and with fatal effect, defeated their adversaries in the most signal manner, with the aid of several enchanters and fiery dragons, which they had seduced into their service by their bright eyes. The ringleaders among the black eyes were severely punished, and the fairy who had first denied the divinity of blue eyes, being of a contradictory disposition, as well as somewhat vain of her beauty, was condemned to a hundred years of invisibility, with the additional punishment of never contradicting any body.

Mortified and saddened to the heart, the Fairy Echo, retired disconsolate into the solitudes of the hills and woods, where there were few sounds and fewer words to repeat; for since she could not contradict any one, she preferred silence to talking. Her favourite resort, was the beautiful spring, for though she was invisible

to others, she could see herself, and her chief delight was to sit and admire her eyes and hair in the bosom of its crystal waters.

Here also would sometimes come, at holiday times, the young maidens and shepherdesses, of the valley, to dress their glossy hair with flowers, and admire themselves in the pure mirror which nature had graciously provided for the gratification of their innocent vanity. This was before the invention of looking-glasses, and if it had not been for this spring, and the songs of the shepherds, accompanied by their mellow oaten reeds, there is reason to fear they would have remained in unhappy ignorance of their own unequalled beauties. One of these songs, sung by the shepherd Daffadowndilly, is of such surpassing obscurity as to merit preservation, seeing that if a man could write so well without exactly knowing what he was saying, how much better would he have done if he had only comprehended himself.

My blue-eyed maid is far away,
  And yet is ever near;
The moon and stars shine not by day
  Nor sun by night—that's clear.

Yet were my lovely blue-eyed maid,
  But absent when she's near,
The anguish of my heart were laid,
  Like flowers upon a bier.

I would not care if star or moon,
  Or sun shone day or night,
If I could see from night to noon,
  My own blue eye of light.

Thus when a thing is not a thing,
  And rare things nothing rare,
A king is nothing but no king,
  And blue eyes black eyes are.

It may not be amiss to mention that at this moment the Fairy Echo, who had not only been obliged to listen to, but repeat the panegyric on blue eyes, at the conclusion of this lucid inspiration, gave Daffadowndilly such a box on the ear, that he thought his brain had exploded, and jumping into the spring would certainly have been drowned, if his head had not been somewhat lighter than the water.

Among all the rural maids who visited the broad crystal spring, none came so often, staid so long, and left it with such lingering steps, as the charming daughter of old Allaine, the richest shepherd in all the country round, in flocks and verdant pastures, where the clover blushed its rosy red, and the blue grass spread its purple riches far and wide. But his brightest jewel was his only child, the lovely Serene Fair, as she was aptly called by her godmother, for her temper was as sweet, as her face and form were beautiful. Her eyes and hair were black, shining soft and glossy; her voice low and touchingly melodious, whether she spake or sung; her figure all graceful from the hand of nature; and the pure mirror of the crystal spring, never reflected any thing so beautiful as when Serene Fair, bent over, and dropt tears into its bosom. She was a great favourite of the Fairy Echo, for she had black eyes, and her voice was so remarkably sweet, that Echo delighted in repeating her song, or her complaints, almost as much, as she formerly did in contradicting every body. One of her favourite songs ran as follows:

Ah! wo is me, to have two loves,
That each has made my heart his prize
The first all beauty but a fool,
The next a fright, but good and wise.

My eyes and ears are aye at strife;
I see the fool and yield my heart,
But when his lips such nonsense prate,
I sigh, and wish to part.

And when the other speaks, such strains
Of wit and sense my rapt ear hears!
But ah! the hump—the hump remains—
My eyes subdue my ears.

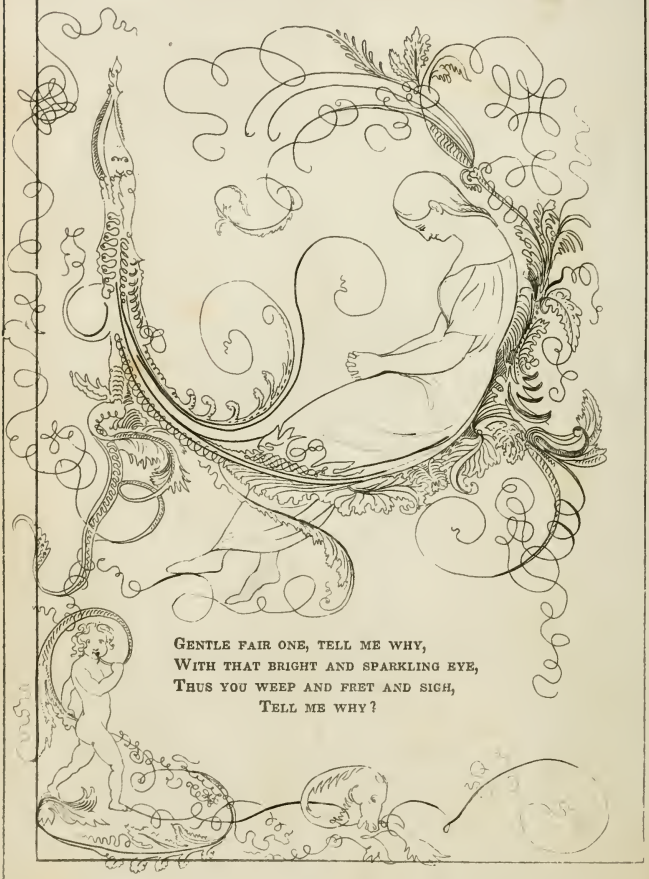
Oh! would kind Fay but grant the prayer
Which cruel fate denies,
Giving the fool the crooked back,
The genius his bright eyes!

As the damsel finished this tender ditty, she raised her eyes to the blue firmament, and cast such bright gleams upwards, that one of her eight-and-forty poetical admirers recognised them in a new constellation of glittering stars, of which Venus formed the centre.

By degrees she became so accustomed to the presence and voice of the young shepherdess, that Echo languished when she was away, and had no other resource in her loneliness, than the endless repetition of her songs and sayings. The fairy grew at last to love her dearly, and resolved in her own mind, that when restored to her former power, and above all, to the privilege of opposing and contradicting whenever she pleased, she would do Serene Fair a good turn, let her cause of sorrow be what it might.

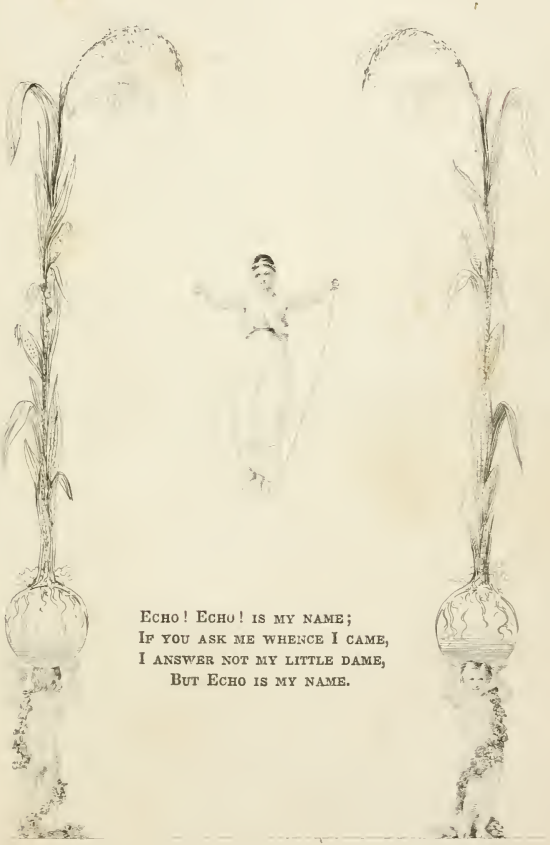
At the same moment the damsel concluded her amorous complaint, the spell of a hundred years dissolved by its own limitation, and the Fairy Echo, not only recovered the power of becoming visible, but the privilege of contradiction. Her first impulse was to deny the possibility of such a predicament as that which Serene described. But she remembered the sweet solace she had derived so often from hearing and repeating the complaining songs of the distressed fair one; and when the latter, on seeing her, started from her sorrowful reverie, and gazed on the fairy with eyes of speaking admiration, the natural kindness of her disposition triumphed over long habit, and she addressed the damsel as follows: for her exultation at

being at length freed from the spell of enchantment, made her feel somewhat poetical:



GENTLE FAIR ONE, TELL ME WHY,
WITH THAT BRIGHT AND SPARKLING EYE,
THUS YOU WEEP AND FRET AND SIGH,
TELL ME WHY?

"Alas! who art thou that askest the question?" said Serene.



ECHO! ECHO! IS MY NAME;
IF YOU ASK ME WHENCE I CAME,
I ANSWER NOT MY LITTLE DAME,
BUT ECHO IS MY NAME.

"I have often heard," answered Serene Fair, "but have never seen thee before. Thou livest among the lonely solitudes of the hills and vales, and repeatest every thing thou hearest, without ever contradicting a single word. Thou art beyond doubt a good-natured nymph and not fond of talking like the rest of thy sex."

"Don't calculate too much on my silence or my good nature," returned the fairy smiling, though she had it on the very tip of her tongue to contradict Serene. "But I heard thy plaintive song just now. Tell me the cause of thy unhappiness, and I will see if I cannot find a cure. I owe thee much, for thou hast been the solace of my solitude a long while past. Tell me thy sorrows, ere I leave this spot perhaps for ever."

"Alas!" said Serene, "to what purpose should I tell thee. My lot is cast, and unless thou canst instil wit into a fool, or change deformity into beauty, it will be useless for me to to tell my story."

"A truce with this nonsense," replied the fairy a little spitefully, "thou knowest not my power, so make an end of thy tale, for I am in a great hurry, and can't bear contradiction."

The damsel obeyed and related her story. She told how she was admired and followed by all the shepherds of the surrounding country, though she blushed at this appearance of vanity—and how, among the rest, Alvord and Daffadowndilly were her most devoted slaves. That the former was the wisest, most virtuous and accomplished of all the young shepherds,

playing delightfully on his oaten reed, inditing the most charming songs, and employing himself in gaining useful knowledge, or relieving the distresses of others. He was the most ardent, yet delicate and respectful of lovers, but, alas! he could not claim to be even well-looking. His eyes indeed, were sparkling, and the expression of his face full of goodness and intellect, but he had a hump on his back, and "you know," concluded Serene, "that spoils every thing."

"Bad enough, I confess," said the fairy. "But of the youth with such a fragrant name."

"O," said Serene, "he is the most beautiful of all the shepherds in a hundred miles round. His blue eyes"—

"Pshaw!" interrupted the fairy—"Blue eyes—I would not give a single sigh for a blue eyed lover. I dare say he has not sense enough to go into the house when it rains."

"He is indeed very silly," said Serene blushing—"but then he is so beautiful. He is tall and straight as a poplar, his cheeks are as red as a rose, his teeth are like ivory, and his mouth the balmiest in the world,

though I grieve that nothing comes out of it but nonsense, sweetened indeed by a fragrance like that of a spring morning."

"But is he good-natured and kind-hearted? for after all my maiden fair, these are of more consequence to a wife than wisdom and beauty in a husband. His beauty will fade in a time, and his wisdom is for himself and the world. But his good temper, is every hour exercised towards his wife and children."

"Alas!" rejoined Serene Fair, "I fear he is not even good-natured, though I confess he is a fool. He cannot endure a reflection on his looks, is careless of hurting the little insects that crawl, or fly about, and always falls into a passion, or becomes pettish when contradicted."

"What not bear contradiction?" exclaimed the fairy, "then I'm sure he won't make a good husband. You must discard him at once."

"But alas! shall I confess to you that I cannot find in my heart to do it. When I look in his face, my heart yearns towards him with irresistihle feeling, and it is only when he opens his lips to speak, or attempts the performance of an act requiring ordinary discretion, I am brought to the conviction, that as his wife, I should blush for him all my life. In pleasing my eyes I shall do violence to my judgement. Assist me, O! fairy with thine art. Endow the fool with wisdom and virtue, or the hunchback with beauty."

"A very difficult case," quoth the fairy, and straightway fell into a fit of musing, during which Serene

stood trembling with anxiety. At length the fairy resumed.

"Wouldst thou that I endow the fool with wisdom and virtue, or the wise youth with beauty?"

The damsel was puzzled. She blushed deeply, and her bosom palpitated with emotion. But soon her determination was made.

"Let the beautiful fool become wise, witty and virtuous," whispered she, at the same time covering her face with her hands, as if ashamed of her choice.

"It cannot be," rejoined the fairy. "The feat is beyond my power, for only Omnipotence can bring forth fruits from the sands of the desert. I cannot engraft wisdom on folly, or plant virtue in the hollow heart. Yet this I can do. I can charm away the hump of the wise and good youth. But it will be a work of time, for these humps are obstinate things. What sayest thou, maiden?"

Serene pondered for awhile, and then with something like hesitation assented to the proposal. The fairy told her to encourage Alvord and Daffadowndilly to visit her every day, but by all means avoid coqueting with either. She enjoined on her to listen to each with attention, to con over their sentiments, and compare their thoughts and actions on every occasion. Meanwhile she herself would apply a charm which would assuredly remove the hump in time, if Serene would only wait with patience.

The damsel promised with rather a heavy heart, and the fairy stamping with her foot on the ground,

there straightway sprung up a beautiful, wide spreading moss rose, whose fragrance perfumed the air all around, and whose profusion of ruddy leaves, afforded a couch of unequalled softness as well as beauty. A flock of gorgeous butterflies of every hue, were harnessed by silken cobwebs, to the mossy velvet stems of the rosebuds which environed the centre rose, and the fairy flitting lightly into the recesses of the leaves, buried herself in the luxury of the morning dews.

"Farewell awhile," said she, "remember my advice, and sometimes think of one who will always be your friend. Perhaps we may meet again."

The butterflies expanded their wings, and the chariot rising slowly, ascended out of sight, leaving the air laden with the most delicious odours.

Serene Fair wended her way towards home, buried in thoughts of the past and future. As she slowly approached the rural abode of the good old shepherd

her father, she was met on the way by Alvord and Daffadowndilly, who approached her, the one with eyes sparkling with welcome, the other, ever and anon glancing his admiring looks towards his own gay, fantastic apparel. He had on a fine new suit, of the rarest fashion, for vanity abides in rural shades, as well as in the court of kings. Alvord was plainly equipt, for he knew his own deformity, and that fine clothes would only make it more conspicuous, by attracting the eyes of the beholder. He suffered his rival to precede him, and came forward with that modest deference, which the slanderers of the sex affirm is more praised than admired by women.

The young shepherdess as she approached, could not help admiring Daffadowndilly, who indeed looked the personification of spritely intelligence, with his airy figure and blooming cheeks. She thought to herself, "Lord! how could I ever think of such a fright as that poor hump-backed Alvord, with all his wit and goodness. To be sure he talks like an angel, but after all there is nothing equal to looking like one."

When Daffadowndilly came up, he neither blushed nor stammered, for he was on too good terms with himself, and began as usual to tell Serene a long string of little nothings, all about himself, for he could talk of nothing else, at the end of which he skipped away in chase of a butterfly. Then it was that poor Alvord ventured to approach the damsel, who at first was strongly tempted to turn away. But the moment he spake, there was a tuneful melody in his voice, a

breathing harmony in its tones, and a witching charm in the intelligence of all he uttered, that at once riveted her ear, which for awhile triumphed over her eyes.

He seemed to forget himself, and become identified with the beauties of nature, by which they were surrounded. He dwelt on the balmy freshness of the zephyr of the south; the green luxury of the meadows; the azure skies; the glorious lustre of the setting sun,

and the sweet concert of nature's harmonies that filled the air all around, until Serene insensibly forgot his deformities, and listened with all her heart. As she heard his voice, she no longer saw his hump, or if seen, it seemed but a trifle. "Surely," thought she, "the charm already begins to work, and the promise of the Fairy Echo will be fulfilled."

As they strolled forward together, the conversation gradually turned from nature to the sources of her beautiful phenomena. Alvord by degrees opened her mind to these, and gradually proceeded upwards in the great climax, to the omnipotent cause of all things, until the soul of the young maiden willingly accompanied him in his lofty contemplations. She bent her eyes steadfastly on his face, and saw the spirit of divine genius that sparkled there, associated with the charm of sincerity and virtue. At these moments she was but an instrument in his hands, and had forgotten Daffadowndilly entirely, when he broke on this communion of souls, with loud and angry exclamations.

The shepherd and the maiden started from a deep reverie, at this offensive interruption, and looking that way perceived the handsome youth approaching in a

most melancholy situation. He was covered with mud, and his gay costume exhibited a sorry figure; his

light curling locks distilled the brown and sluggish current of some stagnant pool, which as it ran down his face, streaked it with a variety of unseemly waving lines.

The first feeling of Serene, was that of displeasure at the interruption; but when she saw the doleful figure approaching, she could no longer be angry, and broke into laughter; whereat Daffadowndilly was exceeding wroth, and approaching still nigher, broke out into a torrent of angry reproaches; for he said he had come by this sad mishap in consequence of too eagerly pursuing the beautiful butterfly, which he intended for her. "And for all this, you only laugh at me. Well I shall take care how I run after another butterfly for you, I warrant." And then he looked at the desolation of his fine new suit, while the tears came into his eyes.

Serene now heartily despised him for the moment, for the spoiling of his clothes, the dishevelling of his curling hair, and the vestiges of the filthy water running down his cheeks, had marred all his beauty. She turned from him with contempt, and taking the arm of Alvord, proceeded towards home, followed by Daffadowndilly, who was in the worst humour imaginable. He did nothing but grumble at the ruin of his new suit, and over and over declared that he was sure he had caught his death of cold. Happening to come across a poor grasshopper, he crushed it with his foot, in revenge for the mischievous consequences of the pursuit of the butterfly.

The evening was now approaching; the long, beautiful, soothing, quiet summer twilight was fast dying away, and they had wandered a considerable distance from the abode of the shepherd Allaine. A quick, bright flash of lightning, passing zig-zag across a black, angry cloud in the west, and followed on the instant by a crash of sharp thunder, roused their apprehensions, and quickened their footsteps. There was nothing save a cat and a spider, which Daffadowndilly feared so much as thunder, and his first impulse was to scamper away homeward as fast as possible. But he stood his ground manfully through two more crashes, and until a third came so tremendously loud and angry, that poor Daffadowndilly decamped full speed, saying, as he ran away, that his mother would die of fright, if he was caught in the rain.

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The storm now roared at a distance, and no shelter was nigh. Darkness gradually shrouded the earth in shadowy gloom ; the peals of angry thunder coursed like ministers of omnipotent vengeance across the rattling firmament above ; the innocent sheep that spotted the long valley far and near, and the rural populace one and all scampered away for shelter from the approaching conflict of the elements. There was fear in the heart of man, and the instinct of the beasts pointed of the coming danger. It was the homage of all nature to her God.

Serene hung more heavily on the arm, and clung closer to the side of Alvord, who felt her heart throb against him, and was happier than he had ever been before. Alvord knew of no shelter for miles around, for the long valley was one continued meadow, where the shepherds pastured their sheep, and they all dwelt in a beautiful village at its extremity.

" Is there no shelter nigh," at length panted Serene who was gradually sinking with fatigue and apprehension, as she heard the whirlwind roaring in the distance.

" None," replied Alvord, " I know every nook and little dell, and sheltered solitude, in all the country round, but it is two miles, at least, to the nearest house."

" What—what shall we do ? Ah ! the heavens are on fire and the last day is come !"

" Fear not, dearest girl," said Alvord, as he pressed the hand that rested on his arm, closer to his heart.

"Fear not. The hand of Heaven is never armed against innocence like thine. Fear nothing. The lightning, the thunder and the rain, are the ministers of beneficence, not of wrath. Do not fear—do not despair, for virtue is ever its own shield, and thou art virtuous."

Still they heard the rain and the wind rushing behind them, swiftly approaching nigher and nigher, and a few big drops gave indication of their speedy coming. At this moment the strength of the young and delicate shepherdess failed; her arm slipped from that of her conductor, and ere he was aware of it, she sunk to the ground. The shepherd then raised, and bore her in his arms athwart the verdant meadows, until he came to the foot of the mountains which skirted this delicious valley all around, separating it from the rest of the world. As ill luck would have it, he struck the base of a rugged perpendicular precipice of rocks, which, while they barred his passage, afforded no shelter from the coming storm.

He was now brought to a stand, and his mind settled in the resolution, to remain where he was, covering the shepherdess with his coat, as well as he could, and thus brave out the pelting storm. She, almost breathless now, clung to him for protection, and he, in tones that were never afterward forgotten, assured her his life was bound up with hers.

At this moment a loud and deafening roar rose on the dead silence which occupied the intervals between the crashes of thunder, and echoed along the side of

the rude wall of rocks. It announced the approach of one of those hungry and furious lions, which in the days of pastoral simplicity, when the shepherds bore no arms, used to haunt these rugged mountains, and often in the dead of night, and most especially when the storm drove man and beast, shepherd and his flock into their lair, would break into the fold, in spite of the watchful dogs, and despoil him of the fruits of a whole life of pleasing cares.

Alvord looked in the direction whence the sounds proceeded and could distinguish, when the momentary intermission of the flashes of lightning left the world in dismal darkness, two fiery balls at the distance of a

few inches from each other, whose ceaseless motion seemed like the restless flickering of lights in the breeze. Well he knew the sound, and the glaring fires, and now he began to despair of the life of her, whom the danger had endeared to him a thousand times more than ever; for at this moment she lay nestling in his bosom, her sense of delicacy being lost in overwhelming apprehension.

The glaring balls of quivering fire approached the spot, where the shepherd and his innocent charge, sat all alone, and helpless, for Alvord had not even a stick, or a stone within his reach. A second roar of the hungry beast, announced his being close at hand, when the exhausted Serene, almost dead with fright and fatigue, cried out in despair.

"Oh that the kind fairy Echo was here! Would she would come!" And the rocks resounded with the music of her plaintive voice, "would come—would come!" followed by a strain of music so sweet and low, that it seemed more like a sigh than a sound, and stilled the raging elements into a deathlike repose. Even the hungry lion paused a little while, as if overawed or charmed with the strain; but straightway couched for a deadly spring. Alvord placed himself before Serene, and sternly awaited his fate.

"Sweet Echo, come!" faintly exclaimed the shepherdess; and "sweet Echo, come!" answered the dumb rocks, now gifted with a tongue. At that critical moment, something flashed brightly through the gloom of night, and fell on the rock at the feet of Alvord with

a ringing sound. He snatched at it, and found within his grasp, a trusty sharp-pointed blade. "Now fear thee not, my own dearest maiden!" but she heard him not, her senses were locked in oblivion.

In the midst of the furious uproar of the elements, a contest commenced between the hungry beast and the intrepid shepherd, while the fainting maiden was gradually recovering to a sense of her situation. By the flashes of lightning she could sometimes see what was going forward, and her ears ever and anon, conveyed to her the pantings of Alvord, and the threatening growls of the enraged lion. She clasped her hands and called on the fairy for assistance, but Echo only repeated her cries.

At length, after a tedious contest, the shepherd, in stepping suddenly backward to avoid the spring of the lion, stumbled and fell on the rock. The furious beast now sure of his prey, placed his huge forepaws on the breast of Alvord, and gave the death-growl, which startled the silence of night, and roused the shepherd-dogs for miles around. At this moment of imminent peril, Alvord, made one last desperate effort, and shortening his sharp-pointed weapon, thrust it with all his remaining strength up to the hilt into the breast of the animal. It reached his heart and he fell with a horrid yell on the body of the shepherd, covering it with a deluge of smoking blood.

Unable to release himself with all his efforts, Alvord lay panting and struggling in the slippery blood of the expiring beast, until Serene, mustering all her remaining strength and courage, came to his relief and by her assistance, at length extricated him, saturated with blood. "Ah! Alvord," cried she, "you have saved my life." "Dear Serene," he replied, "you have repaid the service as soon as it was rendered."

At this moment the dark clouds opened their bosoms and the full orbed moon shone forth in all her mellow beauties, silvering the landscape far and wide, and leading along a train of twinkling stars, fit attendants on the queen of night. A strain of aerial music, floating in the balmy air, and coming they knew not whence, fell sweetly on their charmed ears, and in the voice which warbled the following song, the shepherdess recognised that of the fairy Echo.

Speed, speed away
O'er the meadows gay;
The moon is overhead,
The stars their glories shed
Speed, speed away.

Good night, good night;
Dream of delight
And rest as sweet as I,
While in poppy leaves I lie,
Sleeping without a lullaby,
Good night, good night.

And looking upward, they saw the fairy in her chariot of moss roses, drawn by troops of gilded butterflies, slowly gliding over the summit of the dark gray rocks, and disappearing behind the inaccessible barrier.

Straightway they bent their course towards the abode of Serene Fair, guided by the bright lustre of the moonbeams, and all the way the affrighted shepherdess clung closer and closer to the side of Alvord. If the glowworm suddenly lighted his little lamp at her feet, she would cling to his arm for safety, and when, on one occasion, a huge beetle, buzzed heedlessly in her face, she silently clung around his waist for support. Her heart overflowed with grateful confidence, and she never once remembered the hump on the back of the shepherd.

The aged father of Serene was rejoiced beyond measure at the return of his only child, unharmed; and when she told him of the obligations he lay under to Alvord, he embraced him with tears in his eyes, and called him his son. Sweet rest had they all that night, save now and then, the shepherdess would dream of the lion, and call on Alvord for help.

The next time Serene Fair saw her preserver, she was struck with the diminution of the odious hump. It seemed now scarcely more than a little roundness of the shoulder, and she said to herself, "the spell of the fairy is doing its work. How handsome he will be, without that mountain on his back!" While conversing together, with feelings inseparably entwined together by the recollection of benefits conferred and received; recalling the dangers of the preceding night, and anticipating the approaching festival of May Day, so hallowed by the young shepherds and shepherdesses in the long past times of pastoral simplicity,

the existence of which is wickedly denied by the worldly-minded, who should they see but Daffadowndilly come pranking along over the clover fields, in a new suit, as gay and conceited as ever. He approached without a blush, for I have observed that meanness and cowardice are always accompanied by unconsciousness of their own delinquency, and totally divested of the sense of shame.

The blood of Alvord coursed tumultuously through his veins as he saw him thus coming up with an air of perfect self-possession, as if unconscious of his degradation ; and Serene at first felt inclined to treat him with ineffable contempt. But the fresh air of the morning had thrown such a rich carnation over his cheek ; he walked so trim and straight, and his bright hair curled so beautifully over his white forehead, that in a little while she caught herself contrasting his broad straight shoulders, with the hump of Alvord, which now seemed to have resumed more than its wonted deformity. She sighed as she uttered a fervent wish that the Fairy Echo could have made Daffadowndilly, as wise and brave, as he was handsome.

But this was only the weakness of a moment, and the recollection of the kindness and courage of the one, contrasted with the peevish selfishness, and despicable cowardice of the other, at once reinstated the former in the supremacy of her judgement, if not of her heart. The silly youth uttered a hundred nonsensical fooleries, and exhibited a combination of ignorance and conceit, such as he had often done before,

but which the shepherdess had never found so tiresome and disgusting. Alvord longed to tweak his nose for his impertinence, but his contempt overcame his indignation, and he suffered him to exhibit his follies at full length without interruption. This indeed was his wisest policy, for this interview proved decisive, and from that hour Serene felt inexpressible disgust whenever Daffadowndilly approached her. The fool did not know what to make of it, and his astonishment at the rebuffs he met with, was so ludicrous, that the shepherdess could sometimes scarcely restrain herself from laughing in his face. In the end, however, he consoled himself by ascribing it all to jealousy at his coquetting with the other shepherdesses of the valley.

The first of May was now at hand, and the lads and lasses were all on tiptoe for the doric festival, consecrated to rural simplicity and unaffected happiness. In the few days that intervened, Serene and Alvord had been together often and long; the shepherd was one of those fortunate beings, who improve on acquaintance, and the prediction of the fairy seemed on the point of being fulfilled, for the hump had almost entirely disappeared. The eye of Alvord sparkled brighter than ever with hope, and the pride of anticipated success gave ease as well as dignity to his deportment. Confidence gives new graces to real worth, while it only communicates additional deformity to folly and pretence.

But the merry morn of May, and the birthday of Serene Fair, was come. The flowers, the zephyrs, and the warblers of spring, now all joined in happy harmony to add to the charms of the opening year, while the delicate and fresh tints of the grass and leaves, reminded the beholder of the virgin purity and tenderness of a young damsel, just beginning to indulge some dim, far-distant visions of the great purpose of her creation, namely, to love and be loved. Blithe were the lads and lasses, blithe the chirping brood of many-coloured insects among the grass and flowers, and blithe all nature in her new spring livery. The scene and the season were made for love, and to love, they were now consecrated by the gentle tenants of the shepherds' valley.

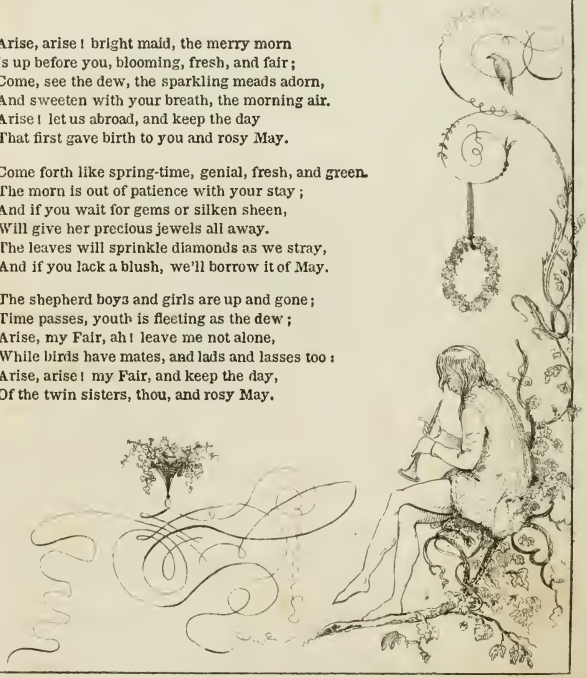
Alvord was up betimes, and placing himself beneath

the vine-encircled window of the beautiful maid, tuned his oaten reed, and roused the twittering birds, who replied to his lay, in a mingled variety of harmonies. Serene was not quite ready to come forth; she was employed in decking herself for the Festival of May; being resolved not to be outdone by any of the rival shepherdesses. While thus occupied, the shepherd strove to speed her lagging with a rural serenade he had composed expressly for the occasion.

Arise, arise! bright maid, the merry morn
Is up before you, blooming, fresh, and fair;
Come, see the dew, the sparkling meads adorn,
And sweeten with your breath, the morning air.
Arise! let us abroad, and keep the day
That first gave birth to you and rosy May.

Come forth like spring-time, genial, fresh, and green.
The morn is out of patience with your stay;
And if you wait for gems or silken sheen,
Will give her precious jewels all away.
The leaves will sprinkle diamonds as we stray,
And if you lack a blush, we'll borrow it of May.

The shepherd boys and girls are up and gone;
Time passes, youth is fleeting as the dew;
Arise, my Fair, ah! leave me not alone,
While birds have mates, and lads and lasses too:
Arise, arise! my Fair, and keep the day,
Of the twin sisters, thou, and rosy May.



Serene was touched with this simple ditty, and as she at length came forth like the goddess of morning, blushing rosy red, she was more than ever struck with the new-born symmetry of Alvord's figure. There was no hump to be seen, and the spell of the fairy had done its work. As they sauntered slowly towards the scene of the rural festival, their hearts communed with each other in that unbounded confidence which is the fruit of the rich soil of love alone, and the eyes, if not the lips of Serene, more than once disclosed the secret of her affections.

Dancing, sportings, music, songs, and tales of love, gave zest to the scene, to which nature lent all her matchless harmonies, of genial airs, meads enamelled with flowers, soft murmuring streams, and deep shady woods, where the shepherd might tell his tale of love, unseen and unheard, save by one alone. Serene Fair was unanimously elected Queen of May, and when it behoved her to choose a King, Daffadowndilly was utterly confounded to see her give her hand to the young shepherd Alvord. He adopted an indescribable grimace, shrugged up one shoulder, and forthwith paid his devoirs to the next most beautiful shepherdess, being determined to be gloriously revenged.

At that moment, the air became redolent of the fragrance of the rose, and all the rural company breathed of nothing but delicious odours. The fairy Echo appeared in the air, seated in the ruddy recesses of her moss-rose chariot, and approaching Serene Fair, addressed her as follows :—

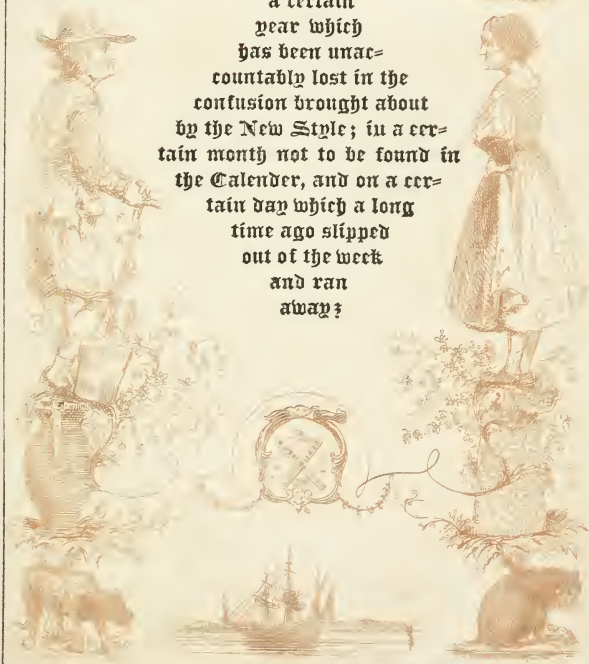
"The spell has done its work; the deformity is removed, and long years of happiness await the youth who essayed to cultivate his mind and his heart, rather than follow the barren paths of vanity and folly. Let me join your hands and give you my blessing, for we shall not meet again, except you require my aid, which I foresee you never will, for you have built your happiness on the solid foundation of worth and intellect." The good fairy then ascended her chariot, and sailing through the air, disappeared high in the heavens.

Old Allaine blessed the choice of his darling child, and lived many years of happiness, in contemplating the bliss of Serene and Alvord. The latter grew more handsome every passing day, and Serene Fair, while her heart throbbed with gratitude to the fairy for her powerful spell, never discovered that the transformation was wrought by the magic of virtue alone.

THE NAMELESS

OLD WOMAN.

IN
a certain
year which
has been unac=
countably lost in the
confusion brought about
by the New Style; in a cer=
tain month not to be found in
the Calender, and on a cer=
tain day which a long
time ago slipped
out of the week
and ran
away;



when the great CITY OF GOTHAM was so little that a man once walked over without seeing it,—

there lived an honest, industrious gardener. He was well known at Smith's Fly, and divers other places, where the burgomasters and citizens were wont to come bright and early in the morning to buy cabbages and the like.

Rinier, for that was the only name he was ever known by — was a hard working man, insomuch that he sometimes laboured on Sunday, before the sun rose ; and as saving as the mother that bore him, who it is related actually darned her old man's breeches, till nobody could tell the colour of the cloth. But a man may love money, though he will not sell his soul for it ; and Rinier was an honest creature though he was once accused by an old woman, who spent two hours every morning, beating down the price of parsnips, of having sold her a cabbage, instead of a cauliflower ; which I verily believe was a great falsehood ; for he was as honest as daylight, though he got all he could, and gave nothing away, not even the peeling of an onion. The most signal act of his life, was raising such a great cabbage, as caused much stir in the city, and out of which, old George Schmelzel, the Grand Krout, made a barrel of sour krout. But, as there was not at that time, a single editor of a newspaper to send it a present to, Rinier was defrauded of the fame he might otherwise have gained, and the fact is now only known, to a few of the learned who are curious in such matters.

Being a native of old Faderland, he ever preserved an affection for the soil of his birth, which he mani-

fested by a singularly strict observance of the venerable customs, and becoming dress of his ancestors, which he practised and adopted with commendable regularity and perseverance. Most especially he did signal-

ize himself by a heroic attachment to Christmas and New Year observances, and to the rites of the most excellent St. Nicholas, of thrice-blessed memory. He never failed to celebrate these glorious anniversaries in a manner, which the degenerate descendants of the ancient Hollanders, of the present time, would do well to bear in mind and imitate. For these reasons, he was well respected by the Saint; who would, however, have liked him much better, had he not been such a close-fisted fellow.

The garden of Rinier, lay on the southern declivity of an eminence, since called Bunker's Hill, in honour of the glorious achievement at Boston. It was just beyond the Collect, a right pleasant sheet of water, lately sacrificed to an Imp of Satan, called "The Spirit of Improvement," which some think was one of the Devils, cast into the herd of swine, whence it descended in a direct line, unto the Corporation of Gotham.

This Collect, was in time past, a place of pleasant sports and joyous recreation, to the small fry of the city, who in summer, came there of a Saturday afternoon, to pelt bull-frogs, and in winter to skate with polished bones, on its icy mirror. Many of our most ancient and venerable citizens here enjoyed this sport, and I myself, though yet a spruce old bachelor, can look back with sober regret, to the period when this spot was the chosen resort, of all the skaters of the town, good, bad, and indifferent. But alas! both pond and hill, are now no more. One has swallowed up the other, and doubtless the time may come, when this authentic story, will not be believed, seeing that no traces of either, will remain to establish its truth.

Yet for all that, here it was, that Rinier dwelt, in his little Dutch-built house, with a sharp peaked roof, edged with teeth like a saw, and a weathercock on the top, which all the world might steer by, as well as the North Star, seeing it always pointed the same way, until one day it made such sturdy resistance to a high wind, that it was brought incontinently to

the ground, thereby egregiously affrighting Rinier's favourite cat, which was watching a mouse in the underpinning of the house. But Rinier was not the man, to knock under, to a northwester; so he fastened it up again, where it continued more obstinate than ever, and always pointed directly opposite to the fish on the steeple of the Dutch church, to the great scandal of all orthodox people.

By the time he was fifty, he was reckoned rich, as the world then went; for he owed no man a stiver, and had money to lend out at interest, if there had been any body to borrow. But in those days of barbarism, there was no "Credit System" in vogue, and a man that owed more than he could pay, was always read out of Church, as a scandal to the congregation. However, it is an old saying, that the more we have, the more we want; and Rinier, proved its truth, for though he scarcely knew what to do with his money, he stickled harder than ever for a stiver, and nobody that wanted to make a good bargain, ever stopped at his little one horse waggon, at Smith's Fly.

One of the great objections to being rich, is the grudge it awakens in others, more especially our friends and neighbours. Nobody envies a poor man his poverty, and consequently he is sure of their good word, so long as he has no occasion for their good offices. But, be this as it may, the prosperity of Rinier proved a source of manifold vexations to him, as will be seen in the sequel, if I live to finish my story.

Adjoining his garden, there dwelt an old woman,

who was his great rival in trade—she in like manner, dealing in vegetables and garden truck, which she carried to market every morning. She was a little ugly thing, as ever put a man out of conceit of matrimony, and had been one principal cause why Rinier continued a bachelor. For when he saw her sharp nose, and chin, her monstrous wide mouth, and heard her shrill voice, of a cold frosty morning, he thought to himself, "By donder dag, if I had such a wife, I would jump into the Collect." Nobody would buy any article of her in market, when they could get it of any body else, and there she would sit every morning till all the market-women, and Rinier among the rest, had sold out, and gone home rejoicing.

This excited her envy and malice against every body, but most especially her nearest neighbour Rinier, for I have always observed, that people envy or hate one another, just in proportion to their nearness. Like poison vines, these bad passions only extend their deadly influence to those who touch or come near them. So the old woman was more spiteful towards Rinier, only because their gardens adjoined each other, and she could not look out of her window, without seeing him. My readers I hope will not get out of patience with these observations, seeing it is always my desire, in these my laborious lucubrations, to mingle morality and instruction, with amusement and recreation.

The old woman whose name I shall not disclose, for fear of hurting the feelings of her descendants now living and flourishing in the city; and who, I wish with all my heart, had been a man, that I might detail her enormities without offence to the sex I have ever held in special love and veneration—the old woman, I say, came at last to hate Rinier mortally, and seeing him one day—for she watched him as a cat does a mouse—counting a great heap of guilders he had amassed together, determined to be revenged on him, for his unmerited prosperty. But I must take in sail, meaning that I must use fewer words, or I shall never get to the end of my story.

She began by poisoning his pigs, debauching the affections of his favourite cat, killing his young chickens when she could get a fair chance, by feeding them

with crusts of hard bread, which stuck fast in their crops, and practised divers other devices too tedious to mention. But for all this, Rinier continued to prosper; and her spite and malice increased with his store of guilders, which she could see him counting every day.

Thereupon, she determined in her own mind, to try some more effectual means of revenging herself on the poor man, whose only offence was, his good success in the world. She worried her very soul out, to find a way to be even with the splutterkin, as she called him, and at last hit on a mode she thought could not fail. She made up her mind to become a witch, and forthwith carried her resolve into execution, by setting out on a pilgrimage to the good town of Naumkeag, where the witches had lately made their

appearance in considerable numbers. Accordingly, giving out, that she was going to visit her relations at Coxsackie, she set forth, embarking in a sloop from Martha's Vineyard, paying a fathom of wampum beforehand for her passage. Captain Jonathan Doolittle looked rather suspicious about taking her on

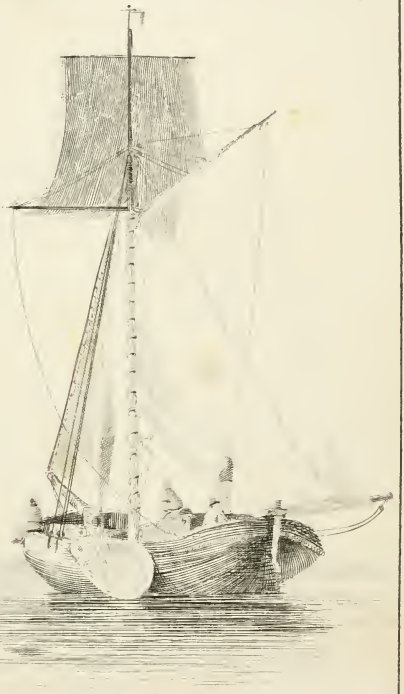
board, but was pacified by the prompt payment of her passage-money. "I'll be darned," said he, "if she don't look jist like some of them old creturs they hung for witches t'other day at Naumkeag."

The suspicions of Captain Doolittle, were strengthened by the behaviour of his vessel on the voyage. She minded her helm no more than if there was no rudder at her tail ; sometimes floating side, and sometimes stern foremost ; and when they came to go through Hell Gate, she cut such unaccountable capers, running first for the Hog's Back, then into the Frying Pan, and then into the boiling Pot, that Jonathan thought the Old Boy had got on board the good sloop Puttaquappuonckquame, as she was called, after a great Narraganset chief, who sold all his land for ten fathoms of wampumpeag.

The sloop was nine days getting to the mouth of Connecticut river, where they fell into such a desperate calm as the Captain had never seen before, and the sun shone so hot, that an old rooster, who had made sixty odd voyages with him, stuck fast in the melted tar, with which the seams of the deck were filled, where he stood cackling and flapping his wings, in great tribulation. The Captain whistled Yankee Doodle ; the mate stuck a jackknife in the mast, and the cook threw a pewter spoon overboard, as an offering to Davy Jones, which Jonathan called a tarnation waste. But all would not do. The good sloop Puttaquappuonckquame, lay like a dead thing, on the waste of waters, while all the live-long day, and day after day, the sun darted his hot beams upon deck, as if he meant to set the vessel on fire.

Captain Doolittle began to smell a rat, and his suspicions concerning the old woman, made great pro-

gress to windward. "I hadn't ought to take that darnation old cretur aboard, for she doos look more like a witch, than any white woman, I ever did lay



my eyes on." Upon this, and the calm continuing more hopeless than ever, the Captain consulted with the crew, each one of which, was a part owner, and

it was resolved to make trial of the old woman, by throwing her overboard, according to law. "If she swims," quoth Captain Doolittle, "the thing is as clear as grit; if she sinks, the Lord have marcy on her soul. Man is a fallible being, and can't know every thing." "Yes," said the black cook, who owned one ninety-ninth of the vessel—"Yes, Capin Doolittle, you right one time any how. If Masser Gor-Amighty want us toe de chalk all de time, I tink he mought as well gie us a leetle more gumption."

While they were all ready to put this righteous judgement into execution, luckily for the old woman, a fine fair breeze sprung up, and all sail being set, the vessel ploughed her way towards home, as if she had become tired of lying still so long. This lucky event saved the old woman for that time, though the black cook considered it only another proof of her being a witch. He insisted she saw into their design, and raised the wind, just as she had laid it, to suit some of her diabolical purposes. It is doubtful what had been her fate, had not the wind suddenly increased to a gale, which soon occupied all hands in taking in sail and shutting the hatches. "The old sinner is at work agin," quoth Captain Doolittle, "but never mind, I'll fix her before the gander turns into goose-pie."

But alas! Captain Doolittle never lived to carry his threat into execution. The gale swelled to a tempest; the darkness increased, as if another night had fallen on the back of midnight; (as a great orator once said;) the lightning created new darkness, and the

thunder which raved, and rattled overhead, was lost in the roar of the winds and waves, that alone made themselves heard in the strife of the elements. "Capin," said the black cook, "what you gie for my share

of de Puttaquappaonckquame? I sell out cheap now." Captain Doolittle pricked his ears, and smelling a speculation, offered him about one twentieth of its value. "Done!" cried the cook. "A bargain!" cried the other, and just at that moment, a great shock struck them both flat on the deck.

The sloop had run on a reef, and, being somewhat more than the age of Methusaleh—that is comparatively speaking—for she was the oldest on record—fell to pieces, at the first shock, and sad to tell, every soul perished, with the exception of the old woman, whom the black cook, had he survived, would have sworn he saw flying away on a broomstick.

"What a fine speculation I've lost!" thought Captain Doolittle, as he swallowed his last mouthful.

"Ecod," quoth the ebony cook, "Ecod, I tink I got to windward of Masser Doolittle dis time." And thus ended all their bargains in this world.

The old woman floated ashore on a hencoop, not a great way from Point Judith, which together with all the country, on that side of Narragansett bay, was inhabited by Indians. As she wandered melancholy along the wild shore, she came to where an Indian was fishing for Skuppaugs, who on seeing her, pulled up his line in a hurry, and ran away whooping and bellowing, so that he might be heard in the silence of the forest, I don't know how many miles, if it had not been for the dashing of the waves, on the rocks at Point Judith.

The old woman though sorely affrighted at first, was emboldened by seeing the copper-coloured villain run away so heartily, and following him leisurely, at length came to his wigwam, where she found him talking to his wife and pappooses, with violent gesticulations. At her approach, the whole family uttered a great

shout and ran away, as fast as their legs would carry them. The old woman followed on, until by degrees, the whole tribe of the Narragansetts was roused up,

and scampering before her at a great rate. Finally, she as it were, conquered the whole country, from Point Judith, to Seekonk, and might have taken possession, only she had other fish to fry.

At Seekonk, she met with some of the good Roger Williams' people, who not suspecting what a diabolical errand she was on, kindly administered to her necessities, and drew upon a piece of birch bark, a rude map of the country, from Seekonk to Shawmut,

whereby she was able to find her way there without much difficulty. Here she came near getting into trouble, on account of her striking resemblance to a witch; but escaped by appealing to the compassion of these good people. She related the story of her dismal shipwreck at Point Judith, and her perilous journey among the Narragansetts, and was not only permitted to pass, but ferried across all the rivers between Shawmut and Naumkeag for nothing. So she arrived at the latter place without any accident.

But the difficulty was, to procure an interview with some one who could put her in the way of joining the society of the witches, who at that time, were beginning to attract the attention of the magistrates. She noticed, that a great many of the people, looked very suspicious at her; and in particular, one of the selectmen rather abruptly refused a pinch of snuff she offered him. She was for these reasons, afraid of making any stir in the business, and had almost determined to go home, as wise as she came; when one day, as she was wandering all alone, among the swamps and rocks, in the neighbourhood, thinking what she should do, she met a little old man, about three feet nothing high, with a gun on his shoulder, about four yards long, and such a cut-water to his face as never was seen before. It was the finest nose in the world to pull, for one might do it, without being within two good yards of him, and quite out of the reach of his arm.

"Ho!" said the little man, "who may you be. I

know all the ugly old women in these parts, but I don't think I ever saw you before;" and then he began to whistle the old tune of

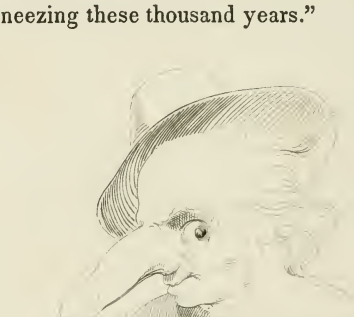
> "Frost-fish and dumplings, ho, Jemima
> Where did you come from, ho, Jemima!"

This he did, with such a sharp shrill sound, that the old woman put her thumbs in both her ears, though she was somewhat hard of hearing. But there was something in the fiery twinkling of the little man's eyes, the redness of his nose, and other particulars, too tedious to mention, that put the old woman upon the suspicion, that he was no better than he should be. So she made a curtsey, and offered him a pinch of snuff, which he accepted, on condition she would herself, apply it to his proboscis, seeing he could not reach it himself. On doing this, the little man was seized with such a fit of sneezing, that it loosed his nose from his face, and away it flew, oversetting the old woman in its passage.

"*Vuur un Flammen!*" cried the old man, setting off in chase of his nose, as fast as his short legs and long gun would let him. It led him a pretty dance, through the swamps, among bushes, briers, and bull-frogs, and it is my private opinion, he would never have overtaken it, had it not flown against a great tree with such force, that it fell to the ground quite stunned. Thereupon, the little man, laid hold of it, and with much ado, clapped it to his face again, grumbling to himself all the while.

By this time, the old woman had recovered herself, and came up puffing and blowing mightily. She took him for one of her countrymen, because he spoke Dutch; not being aware that such sort of people, can speak just what language they please.

"Good woman," said he, "you will oblige me, by telling me where you got that snuff. I've not had such a fit of sneezing these thousand years."



"I bought it of old Blazee Moore, in New Amsterdam," quoth she.

"*Is het mogelyk*," exclaimed the old man, and that's all he said about the matter.

By degrees, they fell into conversation, and at last the old man asked her business in those parts, which it is a wonder he had not done before, seeing the people are very curious thereabouts.

"But for that matter," continued he, "there's no occasion for you to answer. I know all about it, and you've hit the nail, right on the head. I am the man for your money. Come to this spot to-night, exactly at twelve, and your business shall be done, as slick as a whistle." Saying which, he followed his nose, the Lord knows where, for I don't.

When night came, the old woman set forth in full confidence, of being converted into a first rate witch of three broomsticks; for, be it known, the community of witches, is a complete aristocracy, and there are as many degrees of precedence among them, as among the German nobility.

The night was dark as pitch, and had it not been for the bright streaks of lightning, that scampered athwart the sky ever and anon, she could not have seen the nose on her face, even if it had been of the size of that of the old man. Even with these occasional helps, she more than once lost her way, and wandered about she knew not whither. At one time, she entered an old Indian burying-place, where she stumbled over the graves, and sometimes fell down upon them, thus uniting the living with the dead. Escaping from this, she not long after came to the spot, where many years before, there had been buried in one wide grave, the bodies of a party of white men, women, and children, all of whom had fallen under the tomahawk and scalping-knife; having been surprised by the savages, and every soul murdered in cold blood. They had been buried in haste, for in those

times of sore peril, people had enough to do, to take care of the living, letting alone the dead.

The first thing that made her aware of her neighbourhood with the silent graves, was seeing by the flashes of lightning, which now came so quick after

each other, that they might almost be said to run into one, the bones of these poor victims of savage warfare, striking out of the ground in many places. They had been buried on the side of a hill, which in the course of years, had washed partly away by the rains ; and in one place, projected the bone of a leg ;

in another, that of an arm; in another, a grinning scull stared her in the face; and close by were the remains of a little child, all white as the driven snow. The old woman's heart almost failed her, at seeing such a sad sight of the triumphs of death, in this lonely spot, in the darkness of night. She repented of her coming, and strove to find her way back again; but she only walked in a circle, and each time returned to see the white bones, glimmering in the flashes of lightning.

When she had well nigh worn out her strength, and began to despair of release from this labyrinth till daylight, on a sudden she ran plump against something hard, and was almost knocked over.

"Holloa!" cried some one at a distance—"what business have you with my nose?" and she recognised the voice of the little man she met in the morning. "*Ben je bedondered*," added he, for he was apt to speak Dutch when a little ruffled.

The old woman apologized, on account of the darkness; the old man recovered his good humour, and convinced her it was under his special influence that she was kept in this very spot; for here it was that the excellent company of witches celebrated their midnight gambols. He told her it was now just midnight, and the assembly would soon gather together.

And sure enough, they soon began to arrive one by one, till their number amounted to about a dozen witches and wizards. One came on a broomstick; another mounted on a great tom-cat; a third, had put a bridle on a three-legged stool, and came cantering up at a fine rate; a fourth had stolen a neighbouring farmer's pig, and was urging him on tail foremost, by which cunning expedient, the obstinate animal was persuaded that he was going homeward, instead of directly the contrary; a fifth bestrode a rail, the ends of which were sticking into the posts, which performed the duties of legs in the most surprising manner; and a sixth came on an old cock-turkey, that strutted, spread his tail and gobbled as if he were as proud as a peacock. In short, each one was well mounted as need be, and rode with a most witching grace as might be expected.

But the steeds were nothing compared to the riders.

Such another company, is seldom seen of a summer day, nor for that matter, at midnight either. There was one, whose tongue had worn away all her teeth by incessant talking; another whose eyes were always squinting, owing to a habit of continually casting sinister looks at her neighbours; another whose face had the expression of a cat, from being forever on the lookout for the faults of other people, just as the cat watches a mouse; another with a face caved in like a half moon, as yellow as saffron, and with an expression of malignity, that made every one shudder. In fact, if the honest truth must be told, the old woman from New Amsterdam, was the handsomest among them, and she was no great beauty. As to the male witches, they had nothing to boast of, and are not worth a description. Wickedness and evil passions had worn them to skin and bones, and as they moved about among the remains of the dead, they looked like demons, or evil spirits employed on deeds of darkness.

When the party was complete, the old gentleman with a long nose, who was evidently the principal personage of this diabolical assemblage, called them to order. Lights were fixed in the sculls that lay scattered about, from whence arose pale blue flames, and the little man then proposed the old woman, as a member of the fraternity. Considerable debate arose, but after having satisfactorily answered a great variety of questions, artfully calculated to elicit her evil propensities, she was admitted unanimously, with the

exception of a cross, withered virago, who always opposed every thing, merely to have an opportunity to indulge her ungovernable propensity to talking.

She was then sworn on a wicked book of politics, to obey the commands of the little old man; to keep the secret of her initiation faithfully; never to betray any of the sisterhood; and never to do good when there was a possibility of doing evil. Then the little imp, brought out a piece of parchment, made of the skin of a man, that had been gibbeted for killing his own mother, and placing a pen in the old woman's hand, bade her sign her name, which she could not do, by reason of never having learned to write. Upon this, he directed her to make her mark, which she was about to do in the form of a cross, when he exclaimed in great tribulation, "*Wat blixem is dat?*" and snatching the pen, obliged her to make a mark in the shape of a forked tail.

When all was done, the little man called for the music, and straightway came forth from among the dry bones, some half a dozen cadaverous figures, with divers strange instruments of music, such as have no name, that I know of, and whose tones were expressive of sighs, groans, shrieks of agony, and curses of despair; all forming a concert expressive of guilt and misery, rather than of gayety or joy. The assembly then arranged themselves for the dance, under the direction of the little man, who acted as master of ceremonies, and who, by way of a great compliment, led the old woman to the top of the set, and calling

for "the Devil's delight," the whole party commenced their revels.

This "Devil's delight," was a waltz, and it was amazing to see the supernatural agility of these superannuated old beldams. They looked right languishingly on their partners, who in turn, ogled them with a most insinuating air of devotion; they whirled round and round until their petticoats were inflated to the size of a balloon, threw their legs about, in a style that somewhat shocked the delicacy of the old woman, who had been brought up in the old fashioned way; and if the honest truth must be told, behaved almost as bad as the fine travelled ladies of these times do, when they play the whirligig at balls, to the marvellous content of all the admirers of handsome ankles and silken hose. I

have been the more particular in describing the "Devil's delight," seeing it is beyond doubt, the original of waltzing, a practice thus nearly allied to witchcraft. The little man gloriously signalized himself in these diabolical manœuvres, though his nose was so much in the way of his partner, that he was obliged to elevate it to an angle of forty-five degrees, so that it might point over her shoulders.

Thus they continued, while the thunder rattled and pealed above their heads, and the lightning darted athwart the heavens, in zigzag windings just like snakes with forked tongues. The skies seemed on fire, and anon a great oak which almost overshadowed the capering group, was shattered to pieces and fell to the earth, with a crash that for a moment deadened the roaring artillery of the heavens. But still they danced on, whirling around and around in the lascivious mazes of the "Devil's delight," shouting and hallooing with an obstreperous merriment, that contrasted horribly with the uproar above, and the discordant tones of the cadaverous musicians. Even when the rain began to fall in torrents, whose ravages disclosed new relics of the dead, they still continued their revelry, till the crowing of the cock announced the approach of morning.

This too, was unnoticed and unregarded; and the dance continued, with increasing animation, until the storm had passed away, and the bright beams of the rising sun streaked the reddening skies. Then it was that an honest man, who was out thus early in search

of game, suddenly came upon them while they were too deeply engaged to observe him ; and taking to his heels ran back as fast as his legs would carry him,

giving notice to the magistrates of Naumkeag, of what he had seen. Hereupon there was a great stirring and uproar in the town; the magistrate summoned the constables, and other official dignitaries, who together with all those who could furnish themselves with a horse shoe, sallied out to arrest the diabolical rout, and bring them to condign punishment. This they would certainly have done, such was the intensity with which these wicked reprobates waltzed the "Devil's delight," had not the mystical influence of so many horse shoes, communicated itself by some unknown means, to the rout, who gradually remitted the velocity of their airy circles, and began to snuff the air instinctively. Just as the crowd came in sight,

the little man suddenly stopt—listened a moment, and then exclaiming, "Wat donder is dat?" disappeared in the twinkling of an eye, no one knew whither.

Then with a shriek that rent the surrounding air, they one and all, mounted their respective steeds, and soaring in the skies, flew away like so many wild geese all in a row. It ought to have been noted at the time, that after the old woman had made the mark of the forked tail, by which she became fast bound to the fraternity, and shared their punishment, the little man had given her a broomstick, with strict injunctions to take as good care of it, as a sportsman does of a first-rate steed. On this then she mounted the moment the alarm was given, and wending her course towards the west, where lay her home, flattered herself she would soon be out of the reach of danger.

But whether it was that the broomstick had not been properly exorcised by the little man, or that the old woman did not manage it with sufficient skill, I know not, but certain it is, that the rest of the witches left her far behind in their flight. With all her chirruping and spurring, and jogging of the knees, she could barely rise above the trees, and her speed was little more than that of an ordinary pedestrian. Seeing this, the whole crowd turned their attention to her, and began a pursuit that threatened the most alarming consequences. The old woman whipped up the broomstick, and the pursuers ran after, hurling clubs and stones, and shouting maledictions, until they came

so close, that just as she was about to cross a small river that lay in the way, the foremost man seized hold of her cloak behind, which caused her in the hurry of unloosing it, to let go the broomstick, and it fell to the ground. She had just time to become invisible, which she did by muttering a little charm, when the whole body of pursuers coming up, to their great disappointment, found nothing but a broomstick. This they

threw into the stream, where it hissed like a red-hot ploughshare, to the great dismay of the beholders. In memory of the mysterious disappearance of the old woman, and the hissing of the broomstick, the stream has ever since been called Mystic river.

In the meantime, the old woman having lost her magic steed, pursued her way stoutly towards New Amsterdam, occasionally trying her hand at her new vocation, and finding to her great satisfaction, that she did very well, most especially excelling in sticking invisible pins and needles. At length after an absence of three weeks, she arrived safe home ; and the first thing she saw, was neighbour Rinier counting his money, which she found had increased several Dutch ducats during her absence. At this she was very much incensed, and resolved to set about revenging herself without delay, for the imaginary injuries that luckless wight had inflicted on her at various times, most especially, by making money so fast.

During the absence of the old woman, Rinier had pursued the even tenor of his way. He attended to his garden, went every day, except Sunday to market, from whence he always returned with his cart empty and his purse full ; smoked his pipe in peace, and grew to love money more than ever, the more he had. It happened one day as he was at work in his garden, as was his custom, bright and early in the summer-morning, he was accosted by one of the smallest women he had ever seen, all his life before. She was so little that he took her for a child of three or four years old, until on a closer scrutiny, he discovered she was full grown. He wondered who she could be, and where she came from, for the garden-gate was always shut to keep out the Bowery boys, and it was impossible she could have come through the house-

door, which was in like manner barred against all intrusion, when Rinier was at work in his garden.

The little creature made him a mighty low curtsey, but with an air of dignity, showing that she thought herself somebody, and would not have so demeaned herself had she not come to ask a favour. Rinier in return pulled off his hat, scraped his left foot, and bowed almost as low as the little woman had curtsied. Before he had time to ask her what she wanted, for he was somewhat phlegmatic in his speech, the little thing walked, or rather tripped up to one of the most beautiful tulips in the garden, and begged him to give it to her as she longed for it mightily.

Rinier said, rather roughly, that she would long for it a long time, unless she put down twelve stivers, which was the lowest he would take for it, to the mother that bore him, who was buried at Harlaem, close by the great windmill. In vain did the little woman conjure him in the most touching manner. Rinier continued inflexible, the little woman went away without the tulip, threatening vengeance in a

mysterious manner. "Pooh!" said Rinier, "what harm can such a little thing as you do?" But he answered like a great blockhead, for he ought to have known that there is sometimes a great deal of the Old Boy in a little woman.

The next morning when he went into his garden to plant a late crop of peas, he discovered to his astonishment, that his bed of tulips, which as a genuine Hollander, he valued as the apple of his eye, was all turned into an infamous weed, which the learned have since nicknamed Stramonium, the Lord forgive them for it. "Wat blikslager!" exclaimed the good man, for he was too pious to swear, though it must be confessed, since he began to grow rich and hoard money, though he prayed and read the Bible as much as ever, it did not do him much good, for he was always thinking about his ducats.

At first he refused to believe his eyes; but was obliged to be convinced at last, and with a perplexed and sorrowful heart, began to dig up the infamous intruders on his beloved bed of tulips. He was not much of a believer in witchcraft, but this time could not help suspecting some of the gentry from Naumkeag, had been playing their pranks with him. He never thought of the threatenings of the little woman that visited him the day before, as he dug up the loathsome weeds; and not to lose time, planted salad in its place.

The next morning, going as usual into his garden, he was struck dumb, at seeing every thing turned topsyturvy. His radishes were changed into wild turnips; his salads to mullins; his onions to rag weed; his potatoes to paving stones; and his cabbages to great toadstools as high as his head. "Onbegrypelyk!" exclaimed he, and if he had not had his pipe in his

mouth, ten to one he would have got into a great passion. As it was, he stood staring with his eyes wide open, puffing out such volumes of smoke, that the people of New Amsterdan thought it was a great fog rising out of the Collect. "I am bewitched to a certainty," said he to himself, as he thought of the little woman that came to ask him for a tulip.

This was the very day the old hag came back from Naumkeag, after being made a witch, as I have before related; and now poor Rinier was placed between two fires, as it were. The first thing she saw

was Rinier counting his money, and she found he had added several pieces to his store during her absence. Upon which she fell into a great passion, and determined to be revenged on him, the very first opportunity. Accordingly that very night, she came into his

room to stick a few pins in his back, but finding him reading his Bible, she went out rather faster than she came in, for witches have a great antipathy to the good book, seeing they can do no harm to any person while he is reading it. But she took good care that he should read his Bible no more, for as soon as Rinier began to snore, she stole it away, though it burnt her fingers terribly.

Then it was that she commenced her diabolical experiments on the poor man, who from that time had no comfort by day, nor rest by night. Sometimes as he lay awake in the middle of the night, for he now hardly ever slept soundly, he would behold a crowd of fantastic and terrible figures, like nothing human, flitting back and forth about his room; sometimes lighting on his pillow, and sticking pins in him, grinning and chattering all the while. Sometimes one of them would sit down on his breast, and glare upon him with her great goggle eyes, till he would have shut his own, if he could have done it. But his faculties were all swallowed up by terror; he could neither stir hand nor foot; and there he would lay, until at last with a violent effort, he would throw himself from his bed, shaking and sweating in agony. The monstrous figures would then laugh aloud, not like Christian people, but with a hollow chuckling that seemed to come from no one knew where.

Often when poor Rinier set forth of a morning with his marketing—of which he now had special little seeing almost all his garden truck was metamorphosed

as I have before related—his fat pony, who had all his life time before, behaved in the most obliging and peaceable manner, would begin to kick like a devil incarnate, breaking Rinier's shins, staving in the head-board, and finally obliging him to jump out. Then he would neigh with all his might, and dashing down the side of the hill, upset the little cart, with all its contents right into the Collect.

He was accustomed to sit at his door, of a summer evening, with his pipe in his mouth, listening to the croaking of the frogs, with which the Collect at that time abounded, and the chirping, buzzing noises of the thousand little fry of animals and insects, which the kindly warmth and genial showers waken into life and music. People may say what they will, but there is something to my mind irresistibly soothing, and delightfully melancholy in this nightly concert. It is in harmony with the sobriety of evening, and with the gentle emotions of the heart. But now this solace was denied him. Clouds of moschetoes, would rise from the swampy borders of the Collect, wing their way by the sound of their trumpets towards Rinier, and in spite of the smoke of his pipe, settle on every part of his bare skin, inflicting stings, that seemed to come from poisoned needles. Then he would be obliged to flee into the house, shut the doors, and windows, and deprive himself of the balmy air, and soothing concert.

As he sat thus one delightful evening twilight, smoking his pipe, and pondering on his manifold per-

secutions, all at once he was alarmed, by a great commotion in the Collect, which bubbled up in all directions, as if agitated by some internal convulsion. In a little while it subsided, and straightway, he beheld a vast array of bullfrogs, emerging from the water,

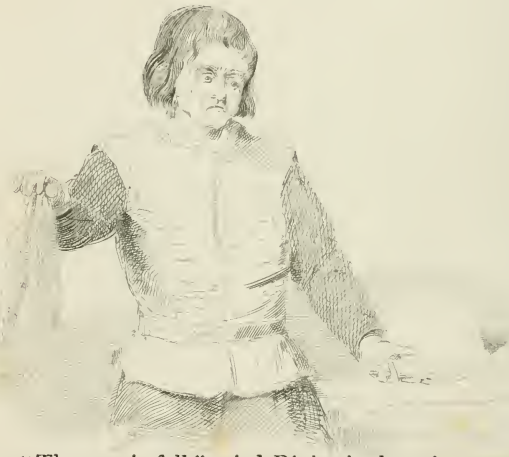
and making their way directly towards him with a confusion of tongues, enough to confound the whole universe. They came hopping forward, the regulars in as good order as one of our Militia trainings, followed by a rabble of little frogs, who not being able to bear arms, straggled along in the rear, like boys at a procession, kicking up a great dust, and adding their shrill pipings to the general concert. Each of the

full-grown troop was armed with a formidable bulrush, which he flourished in defiance, as he followed his leader, a frog of about the size of a young bull, and whose sonorous voice as he marshalled his forces, sounded not unlike a cracked bell.

As this formidable array mounted the hill, in front of the abode of the astonished Rinier, the commotion of the population in the immediate neighbourhood was indescribable. The little urchins who according to the instinct of boys and pigs, were paddling about in the soft ooze of the Collect, when they saw this tremendous rising of the frogs, ran away shouting with all their might; the dogs barked, the hens cackled, the pigs grunted and squealed, and a flock of geese, belonging to Alderman Boddepeepe, set up a mighty alarm, as half swimming half flying, they made for the opposite shore. Never since the great eruption of frogs into the town of Windham, recorded in the history of Connecticut, was there such a consternation created by these animals, among a Christian people.

"Goeden Hemel!" exclaimed Rinier, "what the Duyvel has got into these varments now? I believe they are coming to take possession of mine house. Ah! God bewaar us! I almost wish they would, for it is little better than a purgatory to me now," added poor Rinier, sighing out a great cloud of smoke. Seeing them coming directly towards him, he fearfully ran away into his garden, in hopes of avoiding them, but what was his dismay, when he discovered, by the burning and itching of his skin, that it was nothing

but a thicket of thorns and briers, from one end to the other. To complete the measure of his miseries, when he went to count his ducats next morning, which he always did let what would happen, he found nothing but a bundle of *Shin Plasters!*



"The cup is full," cried Rinier in despair, meaning thereby that the stocking was empty. "O! Saint Nicholas! Saint Nicholas! what will become of me, miserable wretch that I am. I am befairyed, bewitched, bedeviled, and bebullfroged;—assist me good Saint Nicholas, or most assuredly I shall run mad and die." But the good saint came not at his call, and that night he went to bed, as if he never meant to rise again.

It was a dark and dismal night, for the sun was just crossing the line, and the elements were in great commotion, as if one half the world was laughing at his coming, and the other weeping his departure. The rain fell in torrents, the thunder rolled overhead, and the lightnings flashed so vividly through the crevices of the doors and windows, that Rinier covered his head with the bedclothes, though he was almost smothered to death.

"Rinier!—Rinier!—Rinier!"— exclaimed a deep hollow voice, pausing ominously each time it uttered his name.

Rinier answered not. He was speechless with terrour.

"Rinier!—Rinier!—Rinier!"— cried a little tiny voice, with like pauses each time.

Rinier answered not. He had jumped out of bed, and was saying his prayers, and making good resolutions, as people generally do when they think their

last hour is come. He called again on the good Saint Nicholas, and this time he called not in vain. A voice straightway replied, seemingly close to his ear, which he knew to be that of the good saint, and being encouraged by his presence, raised his head, and looked around him like one just waking from some fearful dream. Just at his bedside stood the jolly little man, his cheeks ruddy with health, his heart light with good spirits; and his eyes beaming such bright benevolence, that the room was as light as day. In one corner stood the little fairy he had met in the garden, with her face to the wall; and in another crouched the wicked old woman. They were silent and overawed; for a higher power had now interposed, and their enchantments over poor Rinier were at an end.

"Rinier," said the excellent Saint Nicholas "thou art sufficiently humbled for thine avarice and lack of charity; for know that the vices of mankind, are always the instruments of their punishment; first by the evils they bring upon themselves; secondly by those they inflict on each other. Thy love of money, by enabling thee to hoard it up, excited the envy and malice of yonder wicked old witch, who of late hath been tormenting thee. Thy want of charity towards that little fairy standing in the other corner, in refusing her so small a trifle as a worthless flower, hath justly subjected thee to her elfin power. Both are now ended. Take thy bible again, which I have obliged this old sinner to give up to thee, and hereaf-

ter, fail not to remember, thou canst only be happy, in proportion as thou shalt administer to the happiness of others."

As Saint Nicholas ended, the old woman flew up the chimney, with curses and maledictions; the little fairy, making a low curtsey to the saint, flitted through the keyhole; and Saint Nicholas vanished, no one could tell how.

Rinier slept sweetly that night, which he had not done for a long while, and waking in the morning, beheld his bible on a chair beside him. Then he knew that what had past, was not a dream, and rising up full of hope, resolved to take good heed to follow the precept of the worthy saint, who had vouchsafed to deliver him from such terrible visitations. He became the friend of the unfortunate, the benefactor of the needy, the comforter of the wretched, and lived long enough, to prove the truth of the divine precept of Saint Nicholas, "that we can only be happy, by administering to the happiness of others."

THE FAIRY

EXPERIMENT.

Sequestered among a range of lofty mountains, running from no one knows whence, to nobody knows where, there was once, and may be still, a charming valley where all the beauties of nature seemed to have come together in happy harmony. A foaming torrent, after dashing down the mountain side, meandered with sweet delay all round the little vale, as if loth to lose itself again among the cliffs that environed it, and finally stole away, silently through an almost invisible opening among the hills.

A little meadow, round which the stream formed a bright and glittering ring, all enamelled with nameless flowers, lay slumbering as it were in these quiet recesses, where a cooling and perpetual shade threw its soft mantle all over, and all around. Save the twittering of the stream, no noise ever disturbed the everlasting quiet of the scene, and such was the silence that reigned there, that echo had long since abandoned the cliffs and caves of these mountains, because she could never hear any sounds to reply to, and was in danger of losing her voice for want of use.

It was in this fair sequestered nook of the New world, that a band of fairies, under their king and queen, had sought refuge from the persecutions of science and philosophy, two deadly foes to these playful fantasies, and airy inventions of the imagination, which give delight to the spring-time of youth and around which even wintry age hovers with tender recollections, when recalling the visionary world of long past times. Would that these charming illusions might once more return, and science and philosophy learn to tolerate any other dreams but their own!

Driven from their home in the Old world, they sought the New, and here it was they settled down under their king and queen, who each boasted a descent from a family that had reigned over this very tribe for six thousand years. It may be supposed that they carried their heads somewhat high, and indeed the sway they held was that of a complete despotism except that it was somewhat softened by a habit their

majesties had, of opposing each other on all occasions, so that if either inflicted wrong, the other was sure to interpose and set it right again. That this mutual restraint is one of the blessings of matrimony, cannot be reasonably questioned. Man would be a tyrant, if not restrained by woman; and woman would be man, with all their female follies added to the list of masculine enormities.

But despotism cannot exist in our New world. They had not been long settled in the delightful valley, when attempting to exercise the prerogative of regulating the fairy dances, which had never before been questioned, her majesty found to her astonishment, that there was a decided opposition. They one and all sent excuses, when invited to the next ball, and on being peremptorily summoned, refused outright unless her majesty would allow the introduction of some new waltzes and quadrilles, which had become fashionable of late years.

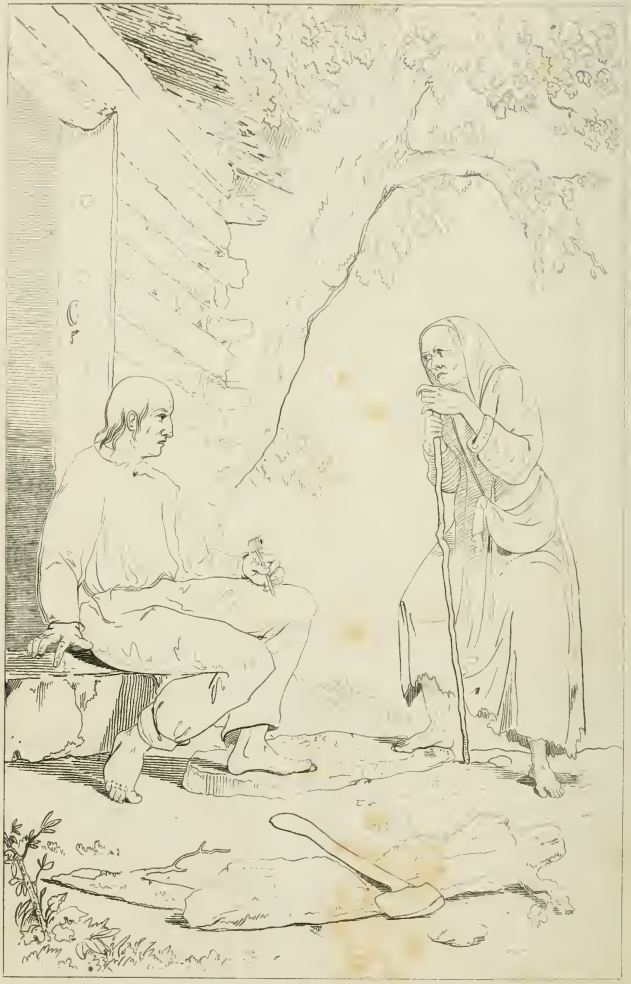
Not to be tedious, one thing brought on another, meetings were called, resolutions adopted, and demands of old rights and privileges presented to the king, which put the queen in such a passion, that she vehemently insisted the troops should be called out, and martial law proclaimed. The prime minister Puck, who delighted in mischief, and who being both a rogue and buffoon, had of course great influence over the royal pair, joined in the plan; and the soldiers being ordered out against the insurgents, joined them to a fairy, with three cheers and a caper. Upon this their majesties, "hopped the twig," as they say in fairy land; that is they flew back to the Old world, where they spread terrible tales of the wickedness of the New; while Master Puck, fled away to the Indians, who adopted and gave him the name of Loogoochee, or Weehunsonack, under which appellation, he plays his pranks to this day, among the wild men of the woods. On the flight of the king and queen, the fairies one and all agreed to abolish hereditary rights, and establish a Republic, where all should have the privilege of a voice in the government. Thus they continue from that time, and such are the benefits derived from the possession of liberty, that with the exception of Master Puck, who still continues a confirmed aristocrat, and is always in mischief, our fairies have become the most harmless people in the world.

Beyond the mountains which environed the abode of the little elfin race, there lived an old man, whose

sole possessions were a poor cottage miserably out of repair, and a little field which he had now become too decrepid to cultivate. He had neither wife nor child, friend nor relation, and lived alone by himself at the foot of a ledge of steep rocks, which rose high behind his humble abode, frowning it into utter insignificance. Yet the prospect before him was beautiful, the air pure, and a spring of chrystal water, overshadowed by a spreading tree afforded him a wholesome beverage. Poor as he was, however, the old man was kind hearted and hospitable. While he had, he gave away; nor did the beggar ever want food, or the traveller a lodging, so long as the old man had a house over his head, or a mess of corn in his barrel.

It happened one day, that an argument arose among some of the fairy rout, concerning the effects of prosperity and adversity on the character of mankind. One portion asserted that wealth was most favourable to the virtues of charity and benevolence; while the other maintained that those who suffered the evils of want, were the most likely to sympathize in the wants of others. The dispute ran so high, that some of the most zealous, began to talk about a dissolution of the Union, when a wise and temperate old fairy addressed them as follows:—

"I did not intend when I rose, to address the meeting, nor do I now mean to make a long speech. I will, therefore, be as brief as possible, and content myself with merely repeating all the arguments that have ever been used on the subject, since the creation



of the world. I have not the presumption to imagine, that I can throw any additional light on the subject"—"You'd better sit down then"—muttered a spiteful old fairy, who wanted to make a speech herself. "Order!" cried another, and the first speaker, finding that the assemblage was fast diminishing, came to the point at once, by proposing to try the experiment on the old man, on the other side of the mountain. "He is now poor and charitable, let us see what effect competence first, and then wealth will have upon his heart."

All agreed to this proposal, and it was resolved that the experiment should be tried. The season had been unfavourable, and the old man's crop of corn, always but scanty, was now diminished to just enough flour to make one loaf. When that was gone he knew not where to get any more, for all the country around, was almost as badly off as himself.

Sitting at his door one summer twilight, smoking his pipe, his only luxury, and thinking what would become of him, when his last loaf was baked and eaten, on a sudden, there appeared before him, an old woman of the most wretched appearance. Her garments were all in tatters; her feet bare; her face almost fleshless, and pale as famine itself. As she leaned on her cane, it trembled under her weight, and her body bent downward, as if seeking refuge from want in the grave.

The heart of the old man yearned with compassion, as he looked at this deplorable figure, which stood

before him, like some speechless spectre of mortality. He arose and offered her his seat, into which she sunk exhausted, exclaiming in faltering accents:—

"Give me to eat, for I am famishing."

"Alas!" replied the old man, "if I relieve thy hunger, I must starve myself. I have but one mess of flour, and when that is gone, I know not where to find another, for the country around is almost destitute."

"Then God help me! I must perish for hunger; for no food has passed my lips for two days past."

"Nay, that must not be," said the old man, whose heart melted with compassion, "I will share my last meal with thee, and trust to Providence for the rest."

Then he went and emptied his barrel of the last batch of flour, with which he baked a little loaf, and

they sat down and ate together. After this, the old woman arose, and thanking him earnestly for his charity, said as she departed, "Put thy empty barrel out by the side of the spring to night."

"For what purpose?" replied the old man.

"I say put thy empty barrel out by the side of the spring to-night," repeated she somewhat impatiently, as once more thanking him, she went on her way.

"What nonsense!" said the old man to himself, as he went once more and lighted his pipe, and sat down to ponder over the desolate future. The injunction of the old woman ran strangely in his head, and finally, without expecting any good to come of it, he went and did as he was desired; after which he retired to rest, and slept soundly till morning. Rising at the dawn of day, he went down to wash himself at the spring; when lo! to his astonishment, he found his barrel filled to the brim with corn. Thereupon

he fell on his knees and uttered a prayer of pious gratitude.

His immediate wants were now supplied, and he was content for a time, though the thought often came over his mind, that he might just as well put out two empty barrels, as one, seeing that whoever filled one, could as easily fill both. So one night he put out two barrels, and in the morning they were both filled to the brim. Having now more than he wanted, he began to think what he should do with the superfluity. At first, he resolved to distribute it among the neighbours who were suffering from a scanty harvest; but then the apprehension that the supply might one day cease, and he be reduced again to want a meal, weighed against his benevolent feelings. So at last he went forth and sold it at a great profit, hiding the money, under his hearth-stone.

When people begin to hoard, they are in imminent danger of becoming avaricious, and so it happened with the old man. He counted his money every day, until he became tired of seeing the same coins over again, and resolved to increase his store in order to keep up the excitement of gain. Accordingly he placed three empty barrels by the side of the spring, which as usual he found full the next morning. These he sold to his neighbours at a great price, taking advantage of their increasing necessities; and the love of money, waxing greater from fruition, he by degrees increased the number of barrels until they amounted to a dozen. These also, he sold every day, until, by the time

a year had passed away, he had become the most wealthy man in all the country round. He built himself a fine house, dressed in rich garments, indulged in gluttonous indulgences, and could now hardly sleep at night, for indigestion, and thinking of getting money. He was no longer charitable, kind-hearted, or benevolent; and when the poor came to him to beg a little supply of corn, which now could be got nowhere else, he would ask them a great price, and if they could not pay it, drive them from his door.

Meanwhile, he continued to set out more empty barrels at the side of the spring; but he observed with dismay, that as he increased the number, the quantity of grain diminished. Every night the barrels lacked more and more of being filled, so that by degrees from being half full, he could now almost see the bottom of them all. This caused great perplexity and apprehension in his mind, and at last he came to a resolution to watch one moonlight night, and learn the whole secret of the business, which though sorely tempted, he had heretofore refrained from prying into.

Accordingly, when the evening shadows of the mountains had gradually been wrapped up in the mantle of night, and all was quiet, he went and climbed the tree which overshadowed the spring, and burying himself among its whispering leaves, awaited the elucidation of the mystery. The bright moonbeams silvered the foliage of the woods; the stars kept their silent watch in the skies; and the voice of sorrow or of joy had ceased in the country around. The old man sat in his covert still as death, watching with breathless eagerness, until the mid hour of the night came, in all the solemnity of silence and repose.

Then all at once, he saw a long train of little tiny elves, streaming down the mountain side, all in a row, and each bearing two grains of corn, which they deposited in the barrels, fleeing away and returning again with the silence and swiftness of thought. Although their number was so great, he could not count them,

yet the old man in his avarice, fearful the barrels would not be half filled before morning, grew very impatient, and could hardly keep himself quiet.

At last there came along a little fellow, carrying three grains of corn, with which he was so overloaded that he made his way with great difficulty, puffing and blowing all the while. As he approached the spring, his foot slipped, he fell to the ground, and his grains of corn rolled away at random. Instead of picking them up, the little tired fellow, sat down on a clover flower covered with dew to rest, at which the old man got out of all patience, and forgetting himself, cried out with all his might—

"Hollo, little fellow! if you don't stir your stumps, the barrels will never be filled."

He had scarcely uttered these words, when the rout of fairy elves, uttering a loud shriek, flitted away toward the mountain, behind which they disappeared like a flock of birds. The old man after waiting some time, in hopes they would return once more, descended from the tree, and fearing to look into the barrels, returned home, to pass the rest of the night in doleful anticipations. All these were realized the next morning when on going to examine them, they were all found to be empty. They were never filled again; but the old man comforting himself, that he had still sufficient to maintain his state, went to his strong box to count his money, when his wretchedness was completed by finding that too all gone.

"Yet I have still my fine house, rich clothes, and

costly furniture," he said as he went to bed next night. But he waked up in the morning, in his miserable hut, with all the emblems of poverty scattered around him.

A few days terminated his existence; for the enjoyments of luxury, had rendered him incapable of sustaining those privations which poverty had enabled him to bear without a murmur.

From that time the fairies determined to reward virtue, not by bestowing wealth or power, but by endowing it with the inestimable blessing, of a blameless conscience, a benevolent heart, and a contented mind.

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